<title>FreeCooperation</title>

<title>**FreeCooperation**</title>

concept and production
Geert Lovink & Trebor Scholz

www.freecooperation.org

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The Department of Media Study, SUNY at Buffalo
http://mediastudy.buffalo.edu

The Department of Media Study offers a rich context to explore the moving image, networked and programmable media and critical theory in its social context.

Keywords <art activism __ audio art __ avant-garde in various media body criticism __ collective web-logging __ contemplative robotics critical theory __critical web-based art __ documentary embodied theory __experimental performance fiction/ dramatic virtual reality __ filmmaking __ film studies graphics programming __ history of sound __ interactive environments interdisciplinary practice __ media analysis __ narrative theory networked and low-cost virtual reality__ poetics postmodernism in film, art, music, and theory__ semiotics soft human computer interaction __ video art __ wireless Internet>

The Department of Media Study was founded in the late 1960s by Gerald O'Grady. We have a long tradition of support for innovative, independent media production and criticism - our digital arts program, for example, is among the first in the United States. DMS enables students the rare opportunity of truly inter-disciplinary work. We are linked to resources in artistic practices and theory in the departments of Anthropology, Architecture, Art, Art History, Comparitive Literature, Communications, Computer Science, Education, Engineering, English, Music, Theatre and Dance; and the Center for the Americas.

The department's approach acknowledges the inextricable link between theory and practice, and the possibility of their fruitful convergence. Media production, in our sense, is a theoretically informed and socially contextualized cultural activity.

How do contemporary forms of cultural production make use of newly available collaborative tools to subvert corporate models of forced cooperation and foster self-organized, independent modes of cultural production and dissemination?

~ FreeYourCollaboration

by **Trebor Scholz**

A variety of new tools for collective cultural practices emerged over the past few years. The Internet has become increasingly interwoven in the fabric of everyday life through mailing lists, chat rooms, collaborative weblogs and wikis. From Murray Bookchin to Buckminster Fuller there is the search for radically different configurations of society itself: a society that is based on a new ethics based on sharing and cooperation. How do contemporary forms of cultural production make use of newly available collaborative tools to subvert corporate models of forced cooperation and foster self-organized, independent modes of cultural production and dissemination? Collaboration means, "to work together to achieve the same goal that we could not achieve as individuals." Cooperation suggests people assist each other, walk in parallels; but in creative industries, collaborations are often forced. In Gleicher als Andere, the German critic Christoph Spehr emphasizes that in Free Cooperation anybody can leave the cooperation at any time, taking with them what they had put in. Free Cooperation needs to pay off; even if there are disagreements, the cooperation needs to remain workable. There is no ideal cooperation in which nobody is taken advantage of—there are always elements of compromise.

Examples of cooperative group models in the urban United States include Reclaim the Streets and Critical Mass. During the anti-war protests of 2003, cyclists in San Francisco, California, blocked major urban intersections and highways with hundreds of bicycles as part of Critical Mass. This was initiated by a leafleting campaign advertising times and dates of such actions, yet the campaign took place without any central leadership. Similarly, Reclaim the Streets is an equally decentralized model of taking back the public sphere. Other examples of community-organizing efforts include: broadcasting free radio, graffiti, and street parties. Jeff Ferrell highlights Radio Free ACTUP, The Micro-Radio Empowerment Coalition, and Slave Revolt Radio.

The green movement exemplifies a type of temporary alliance that chooses no one particular subject position (e.g. class, gender, race) in pursuit of a shared goal (Laclau/ Mouffe). Founded in 1981, Paper Tiger TV presents a different consequential model of collaboration because it creates and distributes collectively produced activist video works that critique the media. The New York City-based chamber orchestra, Orpheus, works without a conductor and rotates all of its functions among the musicians.

Recent history provides many examples of collaborations, including: Bureau d'Etudes, Twenteenth Century, 010010111010101.org, Las Agencias, Luther Blissett, A-Clip, REPOhistory, Dorkbot, Art Workers Coalition, Critical Art Ensemble, Rtmark, and Group Material. Thinking of collaboration the most important art historical association is the Fluxus movement, which includes artists George Maciunas and Alan Kaprov. In 1961 Kaprov wrote the influential essay "Happenings in the New York Scene," presenting his ideas about interaction. For Kaprov, a happening simply meant that "something happens" and that visitors get something to do—artist and spectator interact. Today, the obsession with objects as described by Walter Benjamin is replaced with the obsession for simulation and interaction (Nichols).

Artists have taken the Internet on as a context for their work since its emergence, de-emphasizing individual authorship and answering Bertolt Brecht's demand for an apparatus that goes beyond distribution and allows communication (1932). Early projects aiming at collaborative authorship include Robert Adrian X's Die Welt in 24 Stunden (1983), Roy Ascott's project La Plissure du texte (1983), Norman White's Hearsay (1984), Douglas Davis' The World's First Collaborative Sentence (1994) and the project Épreuves d'ecritures as part of the exhibition Les Immatrieux that was conceived by Jean-Francois Lyotard (1985). In the early 1990s projects like "De Digitale Stad" (Amsterdam) and "Internationale Stadt" (Berlin) established urban cooperative communities grouped around the idea of affordable access to the Internet for all.

Art institutions are neither interested in, nor supportive of Free Cooperation. The artist is desired as exemplary sufferer and genius, not as somebody who is in control of her work. The logic of the art world and that of technology-based art are opposed to each other. The art world focuses on the romanticized idea of an author who creates an art object that can be distributed by many institutions. Technology-based art is variable, often ephemeral, discursive, concept-based, existent in many copies, collaboratively authored, and can be distributed online.

Over the past number of years, communication tools like video conferencing, live chats, web cams, instant messaging, wikis and collaborative weblogs have become inexpensive and readily available. These outlets pose an alternative to the costly and less flexible structure of universities. Collaborative weblogs have better chances to accommodate differences in communication styles than classroom situations. Consequentially, teachers may become primarily linkers to knowledge. Ted Nelson demands, "everybody must understand computers now!," to take the power from the "computer high-ups." This corresponds with Hans Magnus Enzensberger, who compares repressive uses of media with emancipatory applications. In these decentralized settings each receiver is a potential transmitter. The cooperative sound-experiment by the Xchange network (1997) exemplifies a resistance to the commercialization of the medium.

More recently, online communication forums such as Friendster, LinkedIn, or Tribe offer easy-to-use forums for interaction. For instance, Friendster is a web-based application allowing users to network their friends based on social profiles. Free text books are put online at Wikibooks(.org), and many texts can be found at the Gutenberg Project (textz.org). The project Opentheory(.org) applies ideas of Free Software to the development of texts as users of the site improve on each others' submissions. Wikiversity expresses the goal of facilitating learning through the Wiki-real-time logging format. The online initiative Wikipedia will become more comprehensive than classical encyclopedias in a few years. The aforementioned open content formats introduce a new production paradigm, offering new annotational and editorial opportunities and a potential for broad participation in the knowledge commons—from the collection, and re-combination, to the distribution of knowledge. In the context of the post-welfare state economy, these ideas of open theory and open content are

also introduced into self-organized educational projects such as the "The University of Openess" (twenteenthcentury.com). Collaborations should start with the building of trust, testing out the compatibility of values and interests, instead of immediately focusing on the project goals. Social resources like trust, mutual respect, tolerance and shared values make it easier for people to work together. Based on this trust, true communication can take place. The term collaboration assumes that there is a common goal and that group participants share responsibility for it. Therefore, each collaborator needs to be given authority over her task. Collaborators need to get to know each other as people and need to find out about each other's agency and professional needs. Collaboration requires genuine dialogue, a human encounter full of presence; this requires the skills of receptivity and responsiveness. At times, the dedication to the other person can be a bit scary, thus collaboration does not work for everybody. The ABC's of collaboration demand that needs are addressed and lines of communication kept open. Collaborations need to constantly change and question themselves, otherwise they will get trapped in their own definition.

Collective leadership is another important issue. Leadership should take turns in a collaboration. Leadership is usually defined by commitment of time, energy, resources and intellectual contribution. Commonly, the person who contributes the most to a project has the most say. This dynamic endangers the cooperation, as it marginalizes the otherwise more silent or withdrawn group members.

Collaboration and consultation are increasingly inevitable, since technology-based artwork requires deeper levels of specialization bringing together technological and conceptual components. On- and offline there is the risk of involuntary altruism caused by the possibility of freeloaders in the collective process. We must ask: whose labor becomes invisible and which type of labor comes to the front stage? These issues of crediting are more developed in theatre, dance, architecture, music and film, where each person receives credit for her individual contribution. Some members of the Open Source movement suggest a tit-for-tat strategy based on exchanges of effort—one gives a bit of code and then receives a bit. Comparably, Jazz and Dance Improvisation actors study the moves of the others, and take turns leading. However, this improvisational freedom needs to be based on discipline (Brubeck). At best, collaborations can playfully spark off one another, with a "third body" resulting from a chorus (Green). The free development of each individual is the condition for the free development of all (Marx/ Engels), although commonly, self-sacrifice and giving up of personal gain rather than freedom are associated with collaborative work.

Murray Bookchin's hope for radically new configurations of society based on sharing and cooperation can inspire us to a positive active imagination of the future that impacts our collaborative experiments and explorations in the present online and face-to-face. But in the end we should view our collaborations and the tools that facilitate them as what they are without mistaking them for our utopian projections.

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Micro-networks with perpetual ideological transformation are necessary for the promotion of soft resistance. Rather than rooting a micro-networks identity around a firm ideology, it is better to recognize and embrace hypocrisy.

04

~ excerpt from
critical deviant practice

by Nathan Martin

The act of amplifying positive deviance is performed regularly among micro-networks and is of course a challenge that I support. Working within a micro-network, it is always critical to recognize deviance and begin a discussion around that deviance within your own network. What you will find is that while at times it is unnecessary, more often than not it is due to an overlooked aspect of the groups' activities. It is likely that this fault can be corrected if it is indeed recognized as a fault by the group members. If it is not, and without shame or anger, the deviant member should be supported in an attempt to establish a reciprocal system or network or action that addresses the fault they observe. This is a way of continuing the path of the splinter. No deviant micro-network alone can solve the cultural need for splintering. We must find ways to support the growth of the splinter thus revitalizing an entire culture for all with more options and less repression. Through this activity of amplifying the positive deviant even within a micro-network, there is a way to support such exponential splinters. Many micro-networks might likely suffer the disease of being short lived or lacking members. This is not however, anything to be distressed about. The micro-network has served its role if it feels it has. It is not, in this situation, for others to scrutinize due to lack of longevity or hypocritical behavior or splintering. A group that is able to foster splintering among its members should rather be observed for having created enough debate and discussion that no comfort zone was ever allowed to exist for a long period of time. It is this effort to be constantly changing that keeps the critical deviant one step ahead of their attacker. The deviant can be amplified at all levels.

The critical deviant practitioner is ever changing. It is impossible and unfortunate to attempt to define one practice or media for such action. The critical deviant uses whatever tools are available and works from the gutter to attack. The attack is loud and painless. The attack serves not to damage, in the traditional sense, the control system but instead to fire a flare into the sky to attract the attention of future deviants. Future critical deviants are likely only waiting for such a sign, an acceptance, or a micro-network where they might flourish and engage in relevant discourse. Once engaged in that discourse and discovering the pathways that exist underground, it might be expected that the practitioner would take leave of their initial attraction and move to a new point of dissent. It is this move that is most interesting. I expect that many networks made of firm memberships can be expected to be assigned a stagnant role in the control system that is both isolated and marginalized. The isolation and recognition provides a control through the hierarchy. The stagnant group becomes engulfed and their fire extinguished.

I was once performing at a venue in Geneva, Switzerland in 2000 that was practicing this concept of allowance, containment, and surveillance. The building we were performing in was a massive complex many stories high with dorm style bedrooms and multiple organizations sharing space inside. The organizations were all ones related to political actions, underground music, activism, and anarchism. The city donated the

space to all of these groups which they of course accepted. What the building became was a voluntary prison – both physical and mental. As a band staying in the building we were locked in at night to protect the buildings organizational inhabitant's property. The groups had voluntarily neutered themselves. They were behaving as asked and complying with bureaucratic surveillance details to continue living in the lifestyle they had become accustomed to. It is this neutering that comes to many groups that try to hold on to their winnings. The critical deviant practitioner is aware of this death wish and continues to evade containment. The critical deviant practitioner lives on because of her/his ability to be satisfied with remaining forever uncomfortable.

Micro-Networks and Organization

In Smart Mobs, a look at emerging social networks united by gadgetry and mobile communications technologies, Howard Rheingold argues that technologies of cooperation work towards a public good but may be comprised of small networks. He, like many others before him, touts the democratic and utopian potentialities of new technologies. In this vision of a future gone mobile, he creates a definition of public good which is useful to me only as a contrasting opinion. In 1992 while talking with Marc A. Smith, Microsoft's Research Sociologist at the time, Rheingold asked "What do people gain from virtual communities that keeps them sharing information with people they might never meet face to face?" Smith responds "social network capital, knowledge capital, and communion... Collective action dilemmas are the perpetual balancing of self-interest and public goods." Smith goes on to argue that these "communities" are often subject to members that enjoy the benefits of the public good created but contribute nothing to it's sustainability. He calls such members "free riders." Smith here is talking about sustainable networks of individuals. The critical deviant has little regard for sustainability. Movement and lack of structure is what enables the ability to transform, mutate, and oppose oneself overnight. The critical deviant is a vampire and a werewolf at the same time. Free riding is something touted as a tactic for such individuals. This is a necessity of critical deviant micro-networks since by definition they are coming from a system of limited power. The "community" examples cited by Smith and Rheingold are comprised of cell phone carrying youth markets that exist subservient to government regulations and corporate innovation timeframes. The critical deviant micro-network is not governed by such rules. These networks revolve not around a core technology, and even any central ideology is and should be subject to scrutiny and re-scripting. In these micro-networks, free riding does threaten sustainability but this is a benefit to the group that pushes redefinition, continual inclusion and exclusion, and an overall lack of documentation. This is the path of the invisible parasite that is the critical deviant.

Micro-networks with perpetual ideological transformation are necessary for the promotion of soft resistance. Rather than rooting a micro-networks identity around a firm ideology, it is better to recognize and embrace hypocrisy. Understand that

ideologies are made to be broken, and through a cycle of breaking such things and exploring internal dissent, a micro-network will create a slow and soft change within itself.

There is a benefit that many critical deviants enjoy of working with little to no capital. Working without finances creates a sort of freedom for a group. With finances come restrictions, management, bureaucracies – in short, very hard limits and controls. Without the burden of financial assets, a critical deviant is free to drop everything and move on at any time. It is best to avoid any allegiance to an ideology or practice that is strengthened by financial reward. Other non-financial rewards are also likely to have a similar disastrous effect on perpetual deviance. The more money, the more at stake, the harder the lines and the rules are drawn. While limited finances also means a high turnover rate in group activity and a potentially high burn out rate, it also forces this continual reinvention. I am willing to accept that there can be situations where finances are in place and established and critical dissent is able to take place. These situations most likely will only happen after an individual or group has been firmly rooted in one practice for some time – enough time to earn reputation or cultural capital. This is of course then traded to the culture brokers for financial reward, appointment, etc. These positions can be useful and are of course not at root or by nature outside of critical deviant practice – they are simply suspect. As I have stated earlier, critical deviant practice relies on insurrection from all positions and at all points. What I warn is of the difficulties associated with any success or reward in critical deviant practice. Again, sometimes it is best to not keep your winnings.

Culture can burn brighter if the flames are fanned by the exponential growth of the critical deviance. We can find ways to celebrate ourselves and our micro-networks through establishing a splintered culture with options for all. In doing this we must not fall back on the mistakes of our predecessors and controllers, we must not create zoos for the absurd. We must embrace a radical and continuous shift of ideas and identity. The critical deviant practitioner hopes only to become non-existent. Through a critical deviant practice working apart but connected we will slowly create small splinters that will eventually build an epidemic of user-centric culture. We are making our world now.

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The essential narrative problem became how were artists to sustain a critical praxis within the institutions and exhibiting spaces of art, but also could the figure of the artist herself could be stretched, expanded and re-defined? Artists moved outside museum and gallery — based definitions of artistic work, some for a short time, others forever.

05

~ against artists

by **Charles Green**

Between the late 1960s and early 1970s, small, close-knit groups of artists chose short-term collaborative projects for works that stretched conceptualist redefinitions of art to the limit, self-consciously upturning traditional artistic identities (that of the solo artistic genius being the most obvious) through cooperative teamwork. The collaborations should be viewed within the context of political and activist art as well. Their solution, which we will examine, was to turn to framing discourses — of the titular function, and of artistic collaboration as branding — as a way of defeating the apparently inexhaustible tendency of art towards bohemian subjectivity. Artistic collaboration was to be one of the most extreme and temporary of their strategies, the final stage of a general agoraphobic disillusion with the horizons of mainstream conceptual art. Let's take one Australian example: Inhibodress was a small alternative Sydney gallery run for a mere two years, from November 1970 by a cooperative of artists. Inhibodress serves as a reminder of the international nature of post-object art at this time — of an internationalism that has to be re-emphasised again and again. The artists worked collaboratively on many major works; they also created cooperative links with mail art networks in Europe and the United States. Inhibodress artists, who included Peter Kennedy and Mike Parr, systematically enacted their explicit loss of mastery in collaborations that rehearsed a series of complex and hybrid models of artistic work. They meandered backwards and forwards across the borders of art, music, poetry and politics, transmuting the Art & Language idea of "dialogue" into a politicised and aggressively psychological body art, into a mobile idea of experimental community. The extraordinary degrees of aesthetic ephemerality involved were compatible with a commitment to this model of an experimental community, but less compatible with a symbolic enactment of experimental community enacted within art spaces. There are benefits involved in overthrowing art, but also costs in moving beyond the idea of an artist. In other words, when unconventional art produced by shifting alliances of "artists" locates itself inside stable discursive frameworks such as art museums, the tension created by the covert preservation of aesthetic validation, combined with the aspiration to escape precisely this, is not tenable beyond a short period of time. Pluralism does not rule, OK, though we are again in a pluralist moment of art that increasingly resembles the 1970s. This should be unambiguously understood, and parallelism — linking 1970s collaborations to the art of experimental communities in 2004 — is the subtext of my essay.

The essential narrative problem became: how were artists to sustain a critical praxis within the institutions and exhibiting spaces of art, but also could the figure of the artist herself could be stretched, expanded and re-defined? Artists moved outside museum and gallery-based definitions of artistic work, some for a short time, others forever. The first response — to the realisation that the utopian 1960s "end of art" would fail to make way for a world-as-art was many artists' cessation of activity amidst a surprisingly ubiquitous rhetoric of crisis. These responses were accompanied by cycles of collaboratively — made projects production and unconventional models of authorship. In other words, then as now, collaboration was the solution to a problem with art rather than a personal decision per se. That this critique was occurring at the periphery, above all, was no accident. Inhibodress artists were continually involved in forging extensive contacts through inhibodress with a world-wide cooperative network of artists. In the process, they corresponded with artists at the Nova Scotia School of Art, File magazine, and eccentric artist groups at the fringes of international conceptual art such as the Canadian group Image Bank and Marcel Idea. A roughly typed 1971 essay accompanying a show of this art read, "Common to most work in the exhibition, however, is a concern with 'process' and the placing of emphasis on an art-making activity in lieu of the product of such an activity." The collaborative motifs of family and community recur in many accounts and assessments of these international networks. Artistic collaboration was the most promising direction in which the artists felt their work could develop. Inhibodress artist Mike Parr alluded to the role of synthesis in collaboration — that the process of working together with another artist produced more than the sum of two artists' work. He predicted that such hybrid forms of authorship would inevitably proliferate, aware, from Inhibodress's importation of artists' books, of the quantity of international artistic collaborations. Sounds familiar?

But dissent expressed within the closed shop of art institutions was appropriated easily by galleries and their curators, and only this art was to remain visible within art discourse. The activist attack was always dependent upon its mutual dependency with high art, with galleries and museums, despite the oppositional rhetoric of exclusion, resistance and social change. The demand, along with the touching belief that military-industrial complexes actually invest, culturally, financially, emotionally, in culture enough to be tested by strategic cultural dissent persists to this day in the presumption that "art" can be appropriated as a cultural tool and that museum spaces can be strategic sites of protest and change. The logic was obvious back then to many artists. There was, already in 1971, a sense amongst particular artists that collectives, especially Art & Language, were already dated because of their obsessive, academic concern with aesthetic philosophising. By the early 1970s, A & L artists were also abandoning the art world for a more politically committed, collective art that was completely independent of New York or English conceptual art, moving instead into collective street-level social activism, participating in urban redevelopment battles. I'd distinguish these collectives from the artistic collaborations that I wrote about in The Third Hand, for the work created by these artists fitted into recognisable existing historical categories of community art. The artists themselves were aware of this distinction, even though community artists often came from a background of post-object art and its associated critique of art institutions and the art market. Community art projects provisionally removed the distinction between artist and unskilled amateur, redefining the audience and the figure of the artist but not, usually, the conventional nature of the art itself. Community art and the art produced by radical collectives did not necessarily seek to engage with the problems of hybrid authorship, beyond the adoption of cooperative, joint authorship in the production of aesthetically fairly conventional objects.

"Freedom" constituted a different end-game to the state of grace arrived at by formalist artists a few years earlier, but a collective cul de sac all the same. Conceptual artists gradually recognised that eliminating the material object was not a heroic step forward towards enlightenment but, as Benjamin Buchloh later elegantly pointed out, yet another erosion to which art was subjected in the gradual separation of production from its philosophical base, emphasising that the artistic freedom represented by the crisis in artistic language of the early 1970s was a short-lived moment before aesthetic and economic recuperation. Artists sought, of course, to avoid this recuperation, and did so frequently through the manipulation of artistic identity and, therefore, often through collaborations. The most radical strategies in this crisis of identity — and in artists' attempts to avoid or evade recuperation — ranged from the cessation of artistic activity altogether to the adoption of collaborative or collective methods, as I pointed out earlier. The latter, however, constituted in practice an alternate type of authorship rather than the dissolution of art envisaged by the revolutionary theorists and counter-cultural vanguard of 1968, or experimental community theorists today.

My intention in this essay has been to make a definite point about the use of artistic collaboration: collaborations were sometimes a deconstruction of the metropolitan master narrative — that of the "death of art" — and sometimes a reconstitution of the avant-garde narrative in experimental, deliberately "marginal" adaptations to the ecology of art. Unless they moved outside this ecosystem completely (and many collaborations successfully did; they are the necessarily invisible, exemplary figures of my essay), activist artists memorialised a strategic self-definition that reified a conservative cultural category, that of art.

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Can cooperative production take place without the necessary accompaniment of shared collective understanding of the collaboration in question? In other words, can we think of cooperation which lacks its own concept? What would a cooperative process look like if carried out without the presence of a community, institution, or ideology to organize and determine it?

~ excerpt from **decentering cooperation: collaboration without hegemony?**

by John Duda

Can cooperative production take place without the necessary accompaniment of a shared collective understanding of the collaboration in question? In other words, can we think of cooperation which lacks its own concept? What would a cooperative process look like if carried out without the presence of a community, institution, or ideology to organize and determine it?

Free Software as Anarchism?

This problematic is perhaps most obviously relevant for the ongoing and increasingly creative attempts to reformulate political opposition to neoliberalism and imperialism in ways which do not recreate structures of alienation and domination within "the movement." Typically these efforts have sought to deploy loosely affiliated networks of autonomous participants as opposed to more hierarchical organization subsumed under a centrally controlled platform. In seeking to support the claim that such decentralized and radically democratic models of organization can provide, not just structures for oppositional political practice, but replacements for the current hierarchical systems of economic and political organization/domination, activists have turned with interest to the phenomenon of free and open source software development.

This theoretical and political interest in learning from free/open source software has highlighted the latter's reliance on a decentralized international network to support a process of production which does not depend on wages or other forms of coercion, and which makes the product thus produced available at no cost to anyone. Yet it is surprising, given the explicit rejection of hegemony as a political strategy on the part of those seeking to appreciate or perhaps appropriate free software, that much less attention has been paid to the anti-hegemonic conditions which inhere in the free software "community" itself. That is to say, the conditions which make the phenomenon of free/open source software such a fine example of decentered cooperation postulated in this essay's first paragraph. And this despite itself, or rather the despite the untiring hegemonic efforts of some of its most active collaborators.

Machines Against Hegemony

Pierre Clastres famously made the case that primitive society was structured, before the emergence of the state, in ways which sought to ward off this very emergence. It is only through an analysis along these lines that the more profound anti-hegemonic features of free software development come to light. More precisely, the "free software movement" must be seen as structured in such a way which makes the emergence of hegemony extremely unlikely, if not impossible. This structure is not imposed on the movement from some hegemonic position attained in the process of its self-institution, but is rather a concrete consequence of the historical constitution of the "movement." It has been unnecessary for participants in the free software movement to attempt construction of a functioning hegemonic claim in order to use this claim's legitimacy to attempt to banish all hegemony

from the movement, and where such attempts have been made, an analysis along the lines I am proposing will reveal these attempts as both superfluous and doomed to failure. Furthermore, such an analysis can shed new light on the unexpected resistance which activists have encountered in attempts to politicize the free software "community": it is not the case merely that the free software community has decided to constitute itself as fundamentally apolitical, but that the conditions governing the "community" in question preclude its very formation in the first place!

The Details

At least for the purposes of this provisional analysis, what one is tempted to call the "free software movement," can be understood as a field shaped by three distinct conceptual positions, which can only be reduced to a single "movement" through dangerously sloppy abstraction or hopeful idealization(one has to refuse to take seriously for the moment the various incompatible hegemonic claims and articulations made by specific participants in the process in question – for example Richard Stallman's GNU Manifesto arguably includes all three rolled into one utopian vision). It is the irreducibility of these three positions to each other which wards off the possibility of a hegemonic mastery of this field. At the same time, the three positions to be outlined below are to be understood only as theoretical reconstructions of different aspects of a single historical process, all mutually implicated by each other but without for that being reducible to a higher synthesis. For convenience of exposition alone, I will call them the "GNU," "efficiency," and "pirate" positions, with the proviso that these are not to be taken as referring to any actual actors.

Putting It All Together

Despite the fact that the three positions above cannot be reconciled in a single functioning hegemonic articulation, it nevertheless did not consequentially transpire that free/open software development never took place. In fact, it might be argued that it is precisely because hegemony is "warded off" by the interactions between the very basic structures of the field that free software development has been so successful. I have referred to "positions" within the field of free/open source software; perhaps the term "attractors" might better illustrate the productive results of the contradictions between the positions. Like a three body problem in physics, the system is chaotic, with a variety of stable solutions and many unstable ones. These solutions would correspond to the diverse and unpredictable sites of potential collaboration which spring up in the spaces between the three attractors. Because these collaborative spaces are inherently unstable(i.e. not convertible through word or deed into a hegemony over the system), all collaboration taking place within them happens on a sort of neutral territory, where for example anti-capitalists can cooperate with the NSA on the same Linux distribution.

To return to the political, I do not wish to suggest that hegemonic claims should be entirely abandoned: even in decen-

tralized networks, "minimal" hegemonic articulations like the hallmarks of People's Global Action serve a useful purpose. And any political practice may, following Laclau and Mouffe, involve some provisional claim to hegemony. Neither do I wish to suggest that anti-hegemony be erected as the hegemonic claim, as is done in capitalist articulations of libertarianism. But if one considers the example of free/open source software, one has to admit that exploiting unresolved contradictions might in some cases be more productive than insisting on theoretical and political purity. So not only should one seek to seek to institute anti-hierarchical, non-hegemonic structures in which to live, work, and create(on the basis of the ethical superiority of such structures), but to recognize situations and configurations which by their own logic prevent the emergence of a realizable hegemonic claim, and learn to explore, intervene in, and exploit the productive resources such situations can offer.

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grab the rules, play it hard.
basic rules for free cooperation

From: On Rules and Monsters.
An introduction to free cooperation. A video by **Christoph Spehr** and **Jörg Windszus** (to be shown at the conference)

WOMAN (off)

So on one hand, cooperation doesn't seem to make us free. On the other hand, living without cooperation doesn't make us free, either. How can we stay free in cooperation? What is free cooperation?

To learn about free cooperation, we first must understand the three basic principles of forced cooperation.
The first principle of forced cooperation is: KEEP OFF THE BASIC RULES!

(The Time Machine) The big gate is slammed shut. George trys desperately to open it again.

MAN (off)

Forced cooperation is not tyranny – or, more precisely: it is not something that looks like tyranny at first sight. But the basic rules will not give way to anybody. They are not negotiated between the members of the cooperation – be it the workers of a factury, the employees at an office, the women and children in the patriarchal familiy, the people affected by the decisions of a given institution. The basic rules are kept behind iron gates. People and positions may be changed; some distribution of value may be negotiated; smaller rules may be changed and altered or even accepted to be refused. But the core of the cooperation, its basic rules, are not to be tackled by the real members of the cooperation.

WOMAN (off)

The second principle of forced cooperation is: NEVER STOP THE ENGINE!

(The Trollenberg Terror) The group is sitting in the gondola of the cable lift and is taken up the mountain. They see the >cloud< floating into the valley, closing in the houses. The >cloud< enters the downward station and freezes the cables. The gondola stops, goes on, stops again.

MAN (off)

Forced cooperation doesn't turn people into robots – or, more precisely: it doesn't turn people into something that looks like robots at first sight. You may talk. You may quarrel while working. You may make proposals or even hand small protest notes. Some forced cooperations even allow you to vote or take part in participationary systems or in so-called >speech situations< where you may argue that some rules are irrational and that you could work better without them. But never, never must you use material power to push your interests. Do not freeze the cables. Do not stop the gondola. Do not go on strike, do not withdraw your workforce while talking. This is doomed and criminalized as monstrous behaviour. If you try, you will get bombed for.

WOMAN (off)

The third principle of forced cooperation is: SERVE OR PAY!

(The Day the Earth Stood Still)

KLAATU

I came here to give you these facts. It is no concern of ours how you run your own planet. But if you threaten to extend your violence, this earth of yours will be reduced to a burned-out cinder.

Your choice is simple: join us, or pursue your present course and face obliteration. We'll be waiting for your answer. The decision rests with you.

MAN (off)

Not every forced cooperation uses the whip – or, more precisely: not every forced cooperation uses a whip that looks like a whip on first sight. In many forced cooperations, we are not forced openly to do what we are told. Only that it doesn't really make sense to deny. Because if we don't cooperate, if the cooperation splits, or gets spoiled, we are the ones to pay. If we disagree with our boss and split, he still keeps the enterprise, while we leave with empty hands. It's serve or pay: that makes choices so simple in forced cooperation.

WOMAN (off)

Having understood how forced cooperation works, we can now articulate the three basic principles of free cooperation.

The first principle of free cooperation is: GRAB THE RULES!

(Attack of the crab monsters) A man is walking down the dunes to the beach. Out of nowhere, a huge crab appears and grabs him. He cries.

MAN (off)

In a free cooperation, all rules can be changed. Every member is free to challenge any rule, and the members of the cooperation decide about their rules. There are no >holy rules< that are barred behind iron gates and cannot be changed by the members of the cooperation.

WOMAN (off)

The second principle of free cooperation is: PLAY IT HARD!

(The Time Machine) While George is fighting a Morlok and gets attacked by more Morloks, one of the Eloi is considering his hand, deep in thought. Suddenly he makes a fist and knocks down the Morlok.

MAN (off)

In a free cooperation, all members have the same power to influence the rules. This power is not given by any formal structures of decision-making: talking or voting is not enough. Real power comes from the freedom and ability to withdraw one's cooperative activity, to hold back, to quit, to give limits and conditions to one's cooperative activity. To say or to signal: >No, if not.<

(World Without End) The commander comes in from the negotiations. He is angry.

OFFICER

How was it?

COMMANDER

They won't cooperate!

WOMAN (off)

The third principle of free cooperation is: STAY ONLY WHERE YOU CAN LEAVE, AND WHERE YOUR LEAVING IS MEANINGFUL.

(The Time Machine) George notices the Eloi for the first time. Suddenly there are cries: Weena is drowning in the river.

GEORGE

What are you sitting by?

As nobody moves, George leaps into the water and pulls her out.

GEORGE

You're alright?

Without a word, Geena gets up and leaves him.

MAN (off)

In a free cooperation, the >price< of the cooperation being split up, coming to an end, somebody going away, the cooperation becoming looser or being not fully working, is similar (and bearable) for all members of the cooperation. Only under this condition, withdrawing one's cooperative activity is not blackmailing the others. Only under this condition, all members of the cooperation have the same bargaining power. That means: each member can actually leave the cooperation, without paying too high a price; and the leaving of each member will have an actual effect on the others, will be experienced by them as some price they are paying, so that this negative prospect may trigger new negotiations. Because you do not only wish to be allowed to do this or that; you also want to make others do this or that, or do this or that not. For this, you need equal bargaining power. Without bargaining power, they will just let you drown.

(The Time Machine) Weena and George are sitting on the stairs.

GEORGE

I did it to save your life. That doesn't seem to mean much to you or anybody else around here.

WEENA

It doesn't.

GEORGE

Do you realize there were about 20 of your friends watching you drown, not one of them so much as lifting a finger to save you? Ain't that a curious attitude?
Very curious world. Aren't you the least bit interested in who I am? Where I'm from?

WEENA

Should I?

Getting bargaining power usually means getting organized, too. Without the solidarity of others, you cannot level bargaining powers in many cases. In a free cooperation, there has to be a constant re-arrangement of rules, individual appropriation and solidarities to keep bargaining power equal between the members of the cooperation. Making bargaining power equal – through changing rules, individual appropriation, solidarity – is the core business of any emancipatory politics, and the basic definition of what is left politics. It is also the core definition of being someone, of being amongst others who really recognize you.

(The Time Machine) George comes from the rotten books and adresses the sitting Eloi.

GEORGE

You! All of you! I'm going back to my own time.
I won't bother to tell anybody about the useless struggle, the hopeless future.
But at least I can die among men! You ... ah!

He runs out.

WOMAN (off)

Doing free cooperation means no less than taking off the mask, and demanding the others to bear that. Because most cooperations look okay as long as you are wearing the mask that was designed for you; as long as you fit into what others think is appropriate for you; as long as you do what others want you to do. But you only see what a cooperation is worth when there is conflict, when you demand change, when you take off the mask.

(Queen of Outer Space) A spacewoman with a mask on her face and an earthwoman are sitting on a couch.

SPACEWOMAN

You'll have to suffer the consequences for your planned attack.

EARTHMAN

There is no plan of attack!

She goes to a monitor and turns it on.

SPACEWOMAN

Let me show you what happens to those who oppose. Look, Captain! The disintegrator.

EARTHMAN

This is what destroyed the space station!

SPACEWOMAN

And it will destroy the Earth, too.

EARTHMAN

The people! The lives of those countless billions! I admit that men on earth have been ... quarrelsome and foolish in the past. But we're no harm to your work! I swear!

He takes her at her shoulders.

I understand you better than you do yourself. You're denying man's love, for that hatred and for that monstrous power you have.

SPACEWOMAN

Monstrous?

EARTHMAN

You're not only a queen, you're a woman, too. And a woman needs a man's love.
Let me see your face!

He takes off her mask.

EARTHMAN

I'm sorry. I didn't understand!

SPACEWOMAN

Radiation burns. Men did that to me. Men with their wars. - You told me that women need love. Now that you know, would you give me that love?

She offers him a kiss. He turns away.

EARTHMAN

I – I didn't realize.

SPACEWOMAN

You didn't realize!
- Guards!

The (female) guards enter and take the earthman with them.

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It is really hard, and sort of exhausting and frustrating over time, to collaborate online without having meetings in real life. Online work can be very ineffective and slow. You need to have patience if you want to succeed at that level. Some people believe in the dot-com phrases about 'communicating with the speed of light' but that's not at all the case

~ a dialogue between geert lovink and trebor scholz

GL (Geert Lovink) Collaboration, and in particular free coop-eration, sounds somewhat idealistic. It's for people who are bored with themselves or who are handicapped with 'lesser capacities.' Human remain social animals, after all. That's the cynical reading. Another way of looking would be to look at the rise of the cultural economy and the way in which cre-ative industries forces people to collaborate in teams.

The fight for the recognition of group work in sectors such as literature, the visual arts and academia will probably never be won. In general, institutions do not like to work with amor-phous social structures because no one seems to be accountable. They want to deal with individuals, not groups. And often groups are not corporate or non-profit entities and lack any legal status. Groups often thrive in an informal atmosphere, much like love relationships. One does not start a collaboration by signing contracts.

I find it useful to make the distinction between the organized network and the networked organization. It is quite easy these days to network organizations. Of course it requires a lot of security nightmares such as firewalls. It was hard a decade ago, but things have started to move, once email and web use in the office have become common features. The Internet is no longer a mystery for organizations.

The true challenge for me is the transformation of the 'organ-ized network' model, the truly virtual communities out there that, do or do not want to interface with the real world. It's that interface between the real and virtual world, which determines the type of collaboration that we are talking about within our 'Buffalo' context. In my experience it is real-ly hard, and sort of exhausting and frustrating over time, to collaborate online without having meetings in real life. Online work can be very ineffective and slow. You need to have patience if you want to succeed at that level. Some people believe in the dotcom phrases about 'communicating with the speed of light' but that's not at all the case if you work on a more complicated project with a group of people that is dispersed over the globe, in particular if it is voluntary work in the techno-cultural sector. In the beginning there might be excitement but the question is really how you maintain a project after one or two years.

TS (Trebor Scholz) Also in my experience face-to-face meet-ings become the glue and accelerator of online projects, which are otherwise often given a low priority by partici-pants. With regard to the tools that facilitate collaboration it is important to not mistake the rosy projections that capital-ism makes about the future capabilities of these tools with what they allow us to do right now. Open content initiatives get a lot of attention right now. But in the context of our con-ference it was clear that the availability of wikis or blogs does not guarantee that people use it. This will probably take a few more years.

Approaches to crediting in the context of collaboration in the arts and online projects in particular are not easily compared

to the music or theatre field where specialization is so cen-tral. In online projects contributions reach from matters of concept to coding, the programmer has also read theory and contributes to concept development. This complicates the use of hyper-specialized crediting models of the commercial film world as model.

GL Indeed. It gets particularly interesting when informal net-works and P2P collaborations reach a critical mass, even go beyond that stage and transform into something completely different. It's a marvelous, mysterious moment when small and dispersed groups converge into a larger social move-ment and cause an 'event' (as Alain Badiou calls it). But that's exceptional. I don't think that individual collaborations are geared towards creating 'historical' events. I would rather see that as a classic 20th century approach, in which political-creative work is always seen as part of a larger, metaphysical process of history-making.

TS Do you believe in the micro-politics created by small groups and networks contributing to a larger restructuring of society?

GL Of course people will remain fascinated by social mecha-nisms. The more we understand networked technologies, the more we might find out how to mobilize people and create masses.

TS The now much debated notions of the swarm, the multi-tude, how do you relate this to approach of the cell, the small network- which one of these two models do you believe is more effective in its potential for contestation, and critique? One could also bring in here McKenzie Wark's notion of the hacker class.

GL In the case of the World Social Forum, Indymedia and recent anti-war protests it is interesting to see how people deal with 'scalability'. I'd say, they don't. It is extremely hard for decentralized autonomous groups, that are so used to fragmentation, to steer large and complex events. For hyper-individuals (like us), historical events have become indistin-guishable from carnival (as Bahktin described it). Making his-tory is experienced as an interruption of everyday life—and perhaps rightly so. This makes it so hard to see such large events as an experience people can learn from. Instead of looking at the big picture I became more interested in the micro-drama level.

TS Micro-drama is a good start point to start talking about the format of our conference. Early on we decided that we will have no lectures, or panels and that we'll experiment with formats. We talked about problems with conferences based on the exclusive star system with the measurement for success being that everything proceeded peacefully and in agreement. Therefore we do not have keynote speakers, all sessions are grouped in circles, and we asked all to keep their presentations short and focus on reflections about their experiences with collaboration and projects in progress. The

hope here is to break down the division between audience and speakers by not using auditoriums or the top down panel set up, to engage, and enable genuine dialogue. For me as a media artist this event-oriented, discursive practice adds opportunities to forefront issues.

Our conference also gives the opportunity to think about results in the context of a short event like this. At most events positive networking happens, people get inspired, learn, and meet future collaborators. Party, drinks, food, sauna, and swimming make the event more inviting and set a context that encourages encounters between participants. The idea of the conference theory newspaper that you intro-duced at many past events is an inexpensive, easy and effec-tive way to distribute texts. There is a local history of that with Gerald O'Grady who published newspaper for small experimental conferences. Live blogging and video-confer-encing as part of some sessions will make following the event possible. A DVD will be created. A few dialogues with-out audience will be recorded for this purpose. The radio ses-sion can be followed on an online web cast. The documenta-tion will become more integral part of sessions than simply someone standing in the corner with a tripod.

GL There is nothing new about the criticism of 'paperism' and 'panelism,' let's not overdramatize it. This critique is not shocking for those attending academic conferences and feel a certain discontent about the rituals and formats during those events. In our case collaboration is the topic itself and that makes it much easier to experiment explicitly with form, but the urge is there anyway. New media delivery forms only speed up this process. Young people simply do not have the patience anymore to listen to someone reading from paper for forty minutes or so.

It's that simple. It's all about meeting in real-life and having dialogues. Some occasionally have a desire to listen to keynotes by celebrities but for me that's not the essence of coming together.

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Over the years the rebel has naturally become the central image of this culture of consumption, symbolizing endless, directionless change, an eternal restlessness with "the establishment" --or, more correctly, with the stuff "the establishment" convinced him to buy last year.

~ introducing insouciant art collectives, the latest product of enterprise culture

by Gregory Sholette

For those who crave cultural distraction without the heavy intellectual price tag now comes a pack of new and inscrutable art collectives offering colorful, guilt -free fun. Forcefield, Derraindrop, Paper Rad, Gelatin, The Royal Art Lodge, HobbypopMuseum, their names flicker impishly across the otherwise dull screen of the contemporary art world invoking not so much the plastic arts as the loopy cheer of techno music with its nostalgia for a make-believe 1960s epitomized by psychedelia, free love and day-glo instead of civil rights, feminism and SDS. Yes, artists' groups are hot. Or so chimes the harbingers of art world value production as its symbol-producing machinery gears up to meet what is still a speculative demand. One commentator describes the tenor of this new wave of group art making as "fast, cheap, and exuberant." Another uses the term "insouciant," to underscore their untroubled and ultimately apolitical disposition. Indeed, the members of Derraindrop must have been feeling pretty insouciant when in an interview they joked about a plan to,

"… kill Paul McCartney as a publicity stunt last year, we were going to wear like one of our shirts and just totally like fucking blow his head off and get our picture taken in every newspaper in the world."

Ah, the proverbial archetype of artist as sociopath only amplified in this case by a communal spirit resembling the Manson Cult more than the Zapatistas and substituting an aged rock idol for the role of Sharon Tate. But can we really blame these kids? With zero knowledge about the rich history of collective art practice they naively reinvent it as if it were another art style or a fraternity for cultural delinquents. Certainly there exists a long legacy of raging against the anesthetized routines of modern life. And it is peppered with plenty of neurotic role models from Alfred Jarri to Johnny Rotten. Except when the Sex Pistols wailed god save the queen it was anything but an invitation to a schmooze fest with the establishment. Likewise, when the Japanese art collective known simply as "I" filled a gallery with tons of gravel and invoked the name Jarri in the mid-60s it was an intentional act of undermining both institutional space and artistic identity. Just as the descent into primitive eroto- cannibalistic behavior in Jean luc Goddard's apocalyptic film Weekend signals the end of the line for bourgeois radicalism, so too do our fledgling "fast, cheap and exuberant" art collectives blissfully embrace the entrepreneurial values of the contemporary art world including self-satisfied commercialism, fashionable narcissism, and the rejection of art as a vehicle for social change. (Cut to kid pounding bright red trap set in the middle of the woods as pseudo guerrilla cell prepares kidnapped bourgeois family for supper.)

I can assure you that radical politics were very much a concern for the collectives I knew and worked with in the 1980s and 1990s including Political Art Documentation and Distribution (PAD/D), Group Material, Carnival Knowledge, and REPOhistory as well as those that came before and after including Artists Meeting for Cultural Change (AMCC), Art Workers Coalition (AWC), Guerrilla Art Action Group (GAAG), Paper Tiger in the 1970s and more recently Dyke Action Machine, Guerrilla Girls, Gran Fury, RTmark, the Yes Men, Sub Rosa, Critical Art Ensemble, Yomango, Whisper Media and Temporary Services to mention but a smattering of the many self-organized artists organization that have emerged over the past thirty years. And if it is group anonymity itself that permitted so many art collectives to boldly challenge the status quo then perhaps it also provides a mask for the anti-social cynicism of the new and the few?

So why this sudden need to revamp the political rebelliousness of group artistic practice, to re-package it as something "tribal," "exuberant," "insouciant"? When compared to almost every previous collective and many new ones, the recent crop of gallery sponsored art groupettes is unmistakably a product of enterprise culture. As put forward by historian Chin-tao Wu enterprise culture is the near total privatization of everything up to and including that which once stood outside or opposite the reach of capitalism including avant-garde and radical art. At the same time it provides the ground for sensation seeking artist entrepreneurs such as Damian Hurst and the Chapman Brothers. Shock is simply another medium for career advancement. And if communal activity, collaboration, egalitarian cooperation run directly opposite individuated forms of capitalist greed well then enterprise culture does not seek to overtly repress this instead it devises ways of branding and package contradiction in order to sell it right back to us.

But wait. Can capital really appropriate its own antithesis? No, of course it can't. But it is able to utilize a range of sophisticated, representational and code-copying technologies much in the way vaccines are formulated to arouse an immune system response. Vaccines are devised by stripping the protein shell of a virus from its resourceful DNA. The contemporary art industry has found a way of separating the image of collectivist art from its incontestable history of overt, political radicalism. Only after this de-politicized scrubbing process can new group formations be rendered appropriate for the institutional art world. The resulting vacuity leaves them fully re-loadable and ready for an astonishing infusion of jargonistic hyperbole. (And always this rhetoric revolves almost entirely around tropes of primitivistim and naiveté as illustrated above.) De-contamination of collective politics permits the individualistically centered art world to safely "bond" with its antithesis and without any serious disruption of its market for discretely authorized products. Therefore these groovy new art groups not only appear freshly minted but thanks to an endemic historical amnesia on the part of curators, art historians, administrators, critics and sadly even artists, entities such as Forcefield et al… actually appear, choke, radical, at least from within the circumscribed horizon of contemporary art.

But rather than give this ground up completely is it possible to engage in a bit of reverse engineering? I mean if the prestige and financial power of the art world can be mobilized to authenticate one rather anemic form of collective practice, then why not use that breach to leverage other, more challenging and socially progressive collaborative forms? Why stop at the museum either? What about work places, schools, public spaces, even the military? The challenge now is to concoct a counter-vaccine that will render administrated culture helpless before the spread of a radically democratic, participatory collectivism.

But just one last wish; could this Trojan Virus be just as fun and nimble in its own, politically serious way, as the new insouciant collectivity?

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Amateur pornographers are increasingly engaged in a collaborative producing of porn using digital media and networks. They also assert their primal sexual bodies as agents of lust and power negotiating or subverting media regimes.

~ the new media schooling of the amateur pornographer: negotiating contracts and singing orgasm
by Katrien Jacobs

This article presents the works of amateur pornographers engaged in the production and consumption of mediated sex scenes as web-based performances or home-made film-making. These are skilful amateurs, a wave of savvy media practitioners who make products around their candid bodies and sex acts, thus challenging the business goals and performance management of commercial pornography. Their efforts are not to be confused with individuals who pose for porn sites and simulate sex as "glossy amateurs" –bored housewives, horny freshmen, nasty teen virgins, battered Russian migrants, pregnant mommies, crude aunts or rapist uncles. In most types of commercial porn, amateur roles are scripted, filmed and edited by producers who direct and pay models to enter their stage setups and sex scenes. Real amateurs, on the other hand, are sexually driven media practitioners who make sex scenes to explore personal desires and respond to cultural phantasms as mechanisms of power. Amateur pornographers are sexual beings who record their affairs and adventures for the pleasure of others. They use low-budget cameras to capture moments, screening scenes privately or in small groups, or uploading them on the global web through webcams, live journals and web logs.

Peer-to-Peer Porn and the Legal Arm
Historically, a wide range of web-based "peer-to-peer" networks have been developed and used by web consumers of porn to anonymously trade images, such as BBS's, MUDS, Usenet newsgroups, AOL chatrooms; some of them offer more personalized spaces for sexual performance and conversation. Shirky explains that "peer-to-peer," as an enabling concept within web culture, went through a rough patch in 2001 when p2p file-sharing companies were hit by fierce legal battles over copyright, and investors started to withdraw their money. In March 2003, peer-to-peer networks in the United States received another major blow when Congress came out with a report to show that such networks were being used for the trading of illegal porn, specifically child pornography. Unites States Congress thus initiated a widespread crackdown on popular peer-to-peer networks. The General Accounting Office and the House Government Reform Committee came out with a report entitled "File-Sharing Programs: Child Pornography Is Readily Accessible Over Peer-to-Peer Networks" and carried out surveillance tests on the networked computers of individuals and student communities. The study concluded that web users are at significant risk. To document the risk of inadvertent exposure to pornography, the GAO invited the Customs Cybersmuggling Center of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to perform additional searches on KaZaA and found, indeed, child pornography was being traded: "Juvenile users of peer-to-peer networks face a significant risk of inadvertent exposure to pornography when searching or downloading images"(Koontz 11). Koontz's report also cites that the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the fiscal year of 2002 allocated 38.2 million dollars and 228 agents to an "Innocent Images Unit," in hope of collaborating more efficiently with p2p companies on the issue of child pornography. (Koontz 2003)
Despite a widespread "peer-to-peer porn" backlash, the web has continued to foster its porn societies, enabling sexual encounters and the non-commercial trading of products. Meanwhile, software companies, such as Verso Technologies, are making money out of the backlash, trying to sell Internet Access Management Appliances (porn filters) to "minimize our risk of porn liability and increase access to a truly business class Internet." In one of their web ads, a well-groomed business man expeditiously types away on his laptop computer, presumably unperturbed by porn or sexual emails. Files-sharers, on the other hand, may want to draw social contours around the sexual web, and be inclined to govern their own mediated bodies and desires. For instance, Cloei, owner and web manager of www.nakkidnerds.com, wants to feature her community of nerdy girls. As she explains her objectives:
I wanted to capture the girl you see in the back of the class sitting there reading her book, not paying attention to anybody; the girl you see on the street walking to work, or the girl who sits in the cube next to you day in/day out coding her little heart out. (...) These girls are not professional models who go from site to site, they are not even real "amateurs," just friends, and friends of friends whom I have with my sly smile convinced to model for the site, who believe in the site, and who are just in it for the fun and maybe a little ego boost. Who does not need one of those these days?" (Nakkidnerds 2003)

"Suicide girls" and "Nakkid nerds" are models who negotiate the powers of lust and knowledge as complementary forces within their body-packets. They respond with mixed feelings to the glossy formulas of commercial pornography and know that their own ideas and bodies occupy a space of learning. Amateur pornographers have sexual urges despite the Internet backlash, and it will be interesting to see how governments may use "peer-to-peer porn" as an excuse to invade sex-active or activist schools of the Internet. Because pornography is such a sensitive issue in the political world, particularly how it pertains to young children, one has to wonder what laws governments may enact in efforts to stifle not just porn, but the schooling of porn as mutually negotiated sex, all under the guise of keeping the nation-states safe and clean.
In 1999, the Danish film company Zentropa Pictures opened "Puzzy Power" and launched a "Pornouveau Manifesto." The manifesto stipulates that movies must be innovative and must turn people on. However, the portrayal of sex should be "as real and true" as possible, yet should also show diverse forms of energy and sensuality. Sex scenes should be integrated into cinematic narratives and written for the enjoyment of both women and men. Hoping to create positive and inspiring images of human sexuality, pornouveau filmmakers try to make films that they themselves would like to watch. They might not believe that films are better than experiencing real life sex, but it should be a welcome addition to this experience.
Amateur pornographers are increasingly engaged in a collaborative producing of porn using digital media and networks. They also assert their primal sexual bodies as agents of lust and power negotiating or subverting media regimes. Amateur pornographers have sexual bodies. What are the true characteristic of these bodies? First of all, as was reported in a recent New York Times article, "Women Tailor Sex Industry to Their Eyes," more women and queer producers are heading the newer sex sites and industries, promoting better working conditions and the pornography of "body-ordinaries" within decentralized sexual platforms. (Navarro, 2004) The producers of peer-to-peer porn, pride porn and art porn have inherited the masculine power structures and male fantasies inherent in porn, yet have been apt to formulate everyday "performing" bodies as sexual ready and politically astute entities.
This is perhaps the long-awaited schooling of pornography, its rapid democratization, its return to more diversified expressions of sexual-aesthetic lust. The aesthetic and social dimensions of our lust patterns should be carefully observed, and analyzed as case-studies in a reclaiming of porn, in relation to specific contracts between desiring humans. Instead of applying universalizing theoretical concepts or outdated obscenity standards, we can study these sexual performers and their acts of communication. This trend is not yet common among scholars trained in film/media criticism and theory, as it requires a willingness to abandon the ivory tower of speculation, question boundaries between scholarship and physicality, "play" vigorously with subjects who are informed agents of sex. As McKenzie predicts at the end of Perform or Else: From Discipline or Performance, there will be no "good schools" of performance to replace the bad (crusty) ones. There are only packets of activism that acknoledge a need to perform and be performed, as interactive technologies are rapidly modifying the way we share knowledge and nurture the body. More abstract and detached claims of academic criticism will all too be easily appropriated and reversed by sex-negative ideology communities, and consequently, by conservative nation-state governments, which globally have started to "push and punish" porn through radical censorship and surveillance regimes.
We need to maintain ourselves, as pragmatic networkers of non-reproductive sex, as "little" or "strange" body-packets swimming the high tides of superpower politics, the expansionist corporate industries, warfare as model of intercultural longing, and hopelessly outdated sex policies or negligent attitudes as "cold" sexual education. The sexual revolution is over. Yet we can be plainly social, we can develop reasonable acts of seduction, amorously or with effort, within close communities and remote peer networks. Clay Shirky foresees a need for acting as sensitive and socially skilled beings as we enter wider networks and progressive models of research/education: "...there are now file-sharing networks whose members simply snail mail one another mountable drives of music. A critical factor here is the social fabric – as designers of secure networks know, protecting the perimeter of a network only works if the people inside the perimeter are trustworthy. New entrants can only be let into such a system if they are somehow vetted or vouched for, and the existing members must have something at stake in the behavior of the new arrivals." (McKenzie, 2003) We are the new entrants to an existing and far-reaching porn culture, our reflective and cooperative methods of analysis could be applied to the body-ordinaries, as they themselves may re-enter our own body-packets. Amateur pornography will be "our sex" or "our children's sex" – our hunger for knowledge and gratification, very soon.

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This works because nobody needs to have th idea 'University' explained to them the struc ture is clear enough for people to engage Their disappointment, confusion or joy can then be mitigated by experience of wha 'socialized research' actually means in thi context: affective, often antagonistic engage ment, which often becomes fascinatingl urgent.

11

~ open content and distributed creativity

Trebor Scholz (TS) Open content, open distribution, open knowledge, open media, open archive, open history, open access. Publications are in the making that focus on the open content projects and the concept of openness. Comparisons are made to the historical revolution of print culture.

Saul Albert (SA) Firstly I should make some kind of self-institutional disclaimer. The University of Openess is a self-institution of researchers and intellectual interlopers who have decided to socialize certain aspects of their research. I am speaking only for myself and from my experience as a member of several of the UofO's faculties.

The name 'University of Openess' has several associations to me that might help to clarify where it sits in the terms of 'Openness' that you've outlined above.

The name was initially chosen after a great deal of debate and disagreement (the history of which is documented here: http://uo.theps.net/NameChange). The re-spelling of 'Openness' to 'Openess' and the fact that in English the phrase is awkward and uncomfortable to say endeared it to us, and seemed to distance the initiative from two interpretations or inflections of 'openness' that worry me. One is the neo-liberal doctrine of Soros' 'Open Society Institute,' the other is the dogmatic idea you refer to above - that adopting certain licensing structures or re-applying 'open' utilitarian software engineering principles to other forms of cultural production is inherently viable or beneficial.

1. One that trespasses on a trade monopoly, as by conducting unauthorized trade in an area designated to a chartered company.
2. A ship or other vessel used in such trade.

The word also has a useful etymology*

By proclaiming ourselves a University we get access to a whole set of relationships and ways of communicating that are usually difficult to access, and closely guarded. In the University, the models for academic research are sufficiently self-evident that the UofO is not consumed by a constant need to define who we are or what we do. Trespassing on the increasingly proprietary territory of higher education systems and setting up a rogue franchise is also a bonus.

As to what constitutes the UofO, the words 'socialized research' seem to make most sense. On a purely functional level it works like any learning environment: communities of interest form, share, assist and review one another's work. However, this form of the 'University', and the institutional language that is used when we talk about 'Faculties' or 'Lectures' both evokes and destabilizes a set of preexisting relationships and ideas about education.

I think it is crucial to emphasise the importance of affect in these exchanges as it is most often missed out or mechanised out of all recognition by the open source, or 'social' software pundits.

We are also linked to our Sister Universities (http://uo.theps.net/SisterUniversities) and organizations that we exchange a great deal with. The Copenhagen Free University particularly has been an inspiration in my understanding of the UofO, self-institution and affective labour. (see http://copenhagenfreeuniversity.dk).

TS The Copenhagen Free University points to an escape from vocational training, "not obsessed with consensus, order," the "higher education being no longer the domain of the bourgeoisie and its children," "we are the people in the house," "to be productive in the knowledge economy one has to speak, one has to express oneself, one has to cooperate," ... "the artist in the knowledge economy - the "unorganized highly skilled individualized worker without solidarity as the ideal raw model." They "valorize the disgust, the poetry, without internal structure, aesthetics beyond disciplines." All power to the Open Copenhagen University– but how do these high ideals play out in reality? What is taught and by whom and in which space? What is their stand on new media education? What about Beuys, Kandinsky, Moholy-Nagy and Klee together with Fluxus practices and Ted Nelson's passionate views in Computer Lib/ Dream Machines to a collaborative situation in the new media class room?

My interest in open content initiatives and Umberto Eco's idea of the open artwork is based on a collaborative mapping project "Twenty-Four Dollar Island " (http://24dollarisland.net) of local histories of Lower Manhattan that I just launched. The anywhere and nowhere of the Internet is countered by the specificity of the locale. This project is not a passive official map held between thumb and finger but a constantly changing online environment. "Twenty-Four Dollar Island" is the place where you can contribute what you know about your local history. Here, in a few steps, you can become an historian or a cartographer. Your Distributed Library Project invites input of different kind.

SA To answer your questions about the Copenhagen Free University (although they would be better suited to that job), I think their research methods; withdrawal, refusal, escape from mass education, are not really 'high ideals.' In 1968 it made sense to follow a pschogeographic drift in the city, the CFU are drifting into knowledge domains, establishing themselves as an educational self-institution and finding out where it takes them. This is how I understand their slogans.

In reality Jakob Jakobsen and Henriette Heise pay the rent because the CFU is based in their flat, up a narrow staircase by the river in Copenhagen. They hold seminars and screenings in the CFU campus (a partitioned off half of their bedroom and corridor) but also go out and present in other contexts, and their research circulates widely as booklets, websites, publications and available-to-use ideas.

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How do I want to collaborate, and how can computer technology help me to do it?" To answer this question, this essay describes a method for the evaluation of CSCW technology centered around the way that control is articulated in the design and implementation of the software.

~ excerpt from **collaborative literary creation and control**

by Benjamin Mako Hill

Twenty years ago, technologists might have optimistically attempted an exhaustive analysis of computer supported collaborative writing (CSCW) software. Since then, the role of collaborative writing in the corporate and industrial sectors has been demonstrated to be more widespread and more important than even its staunchest supporters had imagined (Ede 1986a). The world has witnessed the rise of free and open source software, the Internet, and a vibrant academic discourse around collaborative writing. As a result, the world of collaborative literary technology is a very different place. Today, merely assembling a list of CSCW software might prove impossible. However, questions and processes at the core of such an analysis remain unchanged and unanswered. Which processes qualify as facilitation of collaborative writing? Which do not? Is synchronous collaboration less meaningful than asynchronous collaboration? What about access control, decision-making roles, change tracking, intra-project communication and integration with real world meetings? How does each of these areas of analysis help define collaboration? In what ways? How do these areas relate to each other? How do they help us make sense of a given technology? This document will not attempt to provide definitive answers to these questions. Twenty years of research and discourse around collaborative writing has demonstrated that no definitive answers exist. There are innumerable technologies facilitating collaborative writing not because the best way to do so is unclear but because the "the best way" is nonexistent. As every collaborator works differently, every collaboration is different. Approached from a perspective that prioritizes flexibility, this can be a strength of collaborative processes.

The essay prompts readers to personalize this central analytical question and to ask: "How do I want to collaborate, and how can computer technology help me to do it?" To answer this question, this essay describes a method for the evaluation of CSCW technology centered around the way that control is articulated in the design and implementation of the software. It is control–articulated technically as design decisions–that defines and limits the nature of collaboration.

The methodology introduced in this essay includes an introduction of several areas of analysis through which computer technology attempts to control collaboration. Once introduced, it will be employed in the analysis of several existing or historically important CSCW technologies as case studies.

Defining Collaboration
Collaboration is largely undefined in a broad technological sense. In a technical context it has been reduced to a buzzword: everybody loves it and every user wants it and every technology seems to support it—but nobody seems to know what it is. When "collaborative" means something different to each individual and in the context of each "collaborative" technology, the label becomes effectively meaningless. Farkas' four-pronged definition, referenced earlier, provides a useful place to begin. While Farkas offers four definitions, it is his last definition, "one person working interactively with one or more persons and drafting a document based on the ideas of the person or persons," that is of primary interest to this argu-

ment. A technology that can facilitate two authors working on the complete text of the document can, with slight modifications—perhaps even managerial or other non-technical changes—also facilitate two authors contributing parts or the process of editorial review. While more difficult to implement, technology that extensibly and flexibly supports the type of collaboration in the first, more "problematic" in Farkas' words, definition, will always be more nuanced, flexible, and advanced than technologies that only support one or more of the last three. Building from Farkas' definitions, my own concept of "meaningful collaboration" describes processes that are flexible enough to encapsulate all four of the types of collaboration listed above in broader, more flexible ways.

Decision Making Roles
Systems that create hierarchies of users and writers often do so by defining roles for participants. In the most simple model of access control already discussed, participants are divided into readers and writers. The labels reader, author, editor, administrator, facilitator, and technical administrator each implies certain positions of power, certain types and degrees of control, and certain possessive capabilities.

Face-to-Face Meetings
CSCW is successful in part because it is a computer mediated phenomenon. Anne Duin Hill's research has found that writing group members who used electronic messages are less inhibited than in face-to-face groups, and that such groups had a reduced chance of one person dominating the conversation. However, these benefits come at the price of a great deal of non-verbal communication that is important to many involved in collaborative writing. Communicating large amount of extra-textual data can be slow and frustrating, especially using asynchronous communication systems. As a result, the use of CSCW technology proves difficult for many writers. As a result, James R. Weber and others recommend augmenting CSCW technology with at least one face-to-face meeting if possible, even when the groups are geographically separate (Weber 1991). Weber notes that these meetings can be invaluable in setting deadlines, formats, rhetorical considerations, and beginning discussion on a project. Additional meetings, in most cases, are also beneficial.
Recognizing the potential power of face-to-face meetings, several pieces of software provide methods for integration of these meetings into the collaborative software in a number of ways. A simple mechanism might allow for notes, transcripts, or a recording of the meeting to be archived or made available through the software. Other more complex and creative mechanism vary in their design and implementation. While none of the software reviewed in the case studies below incorporates this sort of functionality, when present, it can shift power and control dynamics within group and prove immeasurable helpful to many collaborators. As a result, it may be an important consideration in choosing or evaluating a collaborative writing system.

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Trust, empathy and co-operation are endemic to any functioning collaborative environment that scales up from the binary, nearest neighbor, on/off rules of cellular automata to engage in a multi-dimensional interaction. Artists interauthoring in the ethicoaesthetic paradigm processually create subjectivity through intersubjective exchange. Dissensus is as apparent and as necessary as consensus.

~ excerpt from HUH? humans understanding humans: interplay and powerplay in collaborative networks

by Sher Doruff

Interplay

What I want to take a closer look at is know-how exchange from a phenomenological stance with a nod to Felix Guattari's"ecosophy" which is a generalised, virtual ecology (of environment, the social and the mental) that emphasizes the aesthetic production of new forms of subjectivity. It is not dissimilar to an embodied approach to cognition that adheres to the co-dependence of environment, self and other. Embodied theories of mind, highlight brainbody- environment coupling through the sensorimotor structure of the perceiver (Varela, Rosch, Thompson, 1992). The phenomenological discussion of intersubjective experience first established by Edmund Husserl and later by Alfred Schutz (Schutz, 1932) is preliminary to an understanding of how this "coupling" might work and how individual "selves" empathetically experience the "other." The embodied cognitive viewpoint involves three theses: Embodiment, Emergence and Self-Other Co-Determination (Thompson, 2001) and is relevant to this topic in its proposition of the"open intersubjectivity of consciousness" (Zahavi, 1997). Addressing the experience of collaboration from a phenomenological perspective of everyday action in the world, creates a pathway for a deeper understanding of the design and implementation of human-human-computer interaction (HHCI). An extension of this perspective, which reflexively enfolds the participant observer into the unfolding of a self-generating process, is a motivation for new media and Live Arts practitioners. Many projects are often shells or tools that require proactive participation from an audience of participants to 'become'.

Powerplay

I believe it is useful to frame the current "Info-Empire" debate (Schneider, Lovink, 2004) on relational power dynamics and identity from the trajectory of research in biological cognition. Theorizing on network activity between humans that takes an ontological stance focused on the form of meaning, without some recognition of the doing, of the ontogenesis of shared meaning, would seem paradoxical to the effort. In their recent essay Notes on the State of Networking, Schneider and Lovink complain: Maybe it is better to understand networking as a syncope of power, a temporary loss of consciousness and posture, rather than a panacea against corruption, commodification, resentment and the general dumbness of traditional hierarchies. The result of networking often is a rampant will to powerlessness that escapes the idea of collective progress under the pretext of participation, fluidity, escapism and overcommitment.

The issue they are tapping runs deeper than a "temporary loss of consciousness" (which if translated as "unconscious" presents a whole range of semantic problems) and"will to powerlessness" which may indeed be a precondition of participation in a decentralized net but could as well be its opposite or none-of-the-above. I'd like to deflect the issue of power and control temporarily to one of ethics and responsibility by way of the generation of interconnectedness, between humans and between humans and machines. One thesis of intersubjective theory, or self-other determination, posits that we are "networking" as newborn infants, as early as one hour young. Observation of newborns confirms a pro-

prioceptive awareness through mimesis establishing that our selfconsciousness emerges from a preverbal and primordial sense of self, inseparably coupled to <Nettime>, 29 February 2004 the perceptual recognition of other humans. (Gallagher and Meltzoff, 1996; Meltzoff and Moore,1999). In making a case for the open intersubjectivity of consciousness, Dan Zahavi states: Had subjectivity been an exclusive first-person phenomenon, where it is only present in the form of an immediate and unique inwardness, I would only know one case of it – my own - and would never get to know any other. Not only would I lack the means of ever recognizing other bodies as embodied subjects, I would also lack the ability to recognize myself in the mirror, and more generally be unable to grasp a certainintersubjectively describable body as myself.

Perhaps the debate begins with the question of whether control on some level, is a condition of the mutual construction of meaning, though it would be a difficult to support as a generalization. In any event, human agency in networks -networking and information exchange - takes on a variegated character when construed in terms of embodied consciousness. In response to Lovink and Schneider's article, Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker have pointed out: Biological or computational, the network is always configured by its protocols. We stress this integrative approach because we cannot afford to view "information" naively as solely immaterial. Negri notes that "all politics is biopolitics," and to this, we would add that all networks are not only biopolitical but biotechnical networks. Protocological control in networks is as much about networks as *living networks* as it is about the materiality of informatics.

Intersubjectivity and Co-operation

Trust, empathy and co-operation are endemic to any functioning collaborative environment that scales up from the binary, nearest neighbor, on/off rules of cellular automata to engage in a multi-dimensional interaction. Artists interauthoring in the ethicoaesthetic paradigm processually create subjectivity through intersubjective exchange. Dissensus is as apparent and as necessary as consensus. The creative emerges from difference but that need not read solely as mutation engendered survival of the fittest. Evolutionary trajects need to be re-evaluated. At the turn of the 20th century Petr Kropotkin, perhaps better known for his anarchism than his altruism, rejected Darwinian competitive models of survival and insisted on cooperative survival strategies that mutually aid bothspecies and individual. It's s a credible model for distributed ecologies _ or ecosophies, according to Guattari. Properties of self-organization, diversity and difference are key to the transformation of collaborative dynamics. J.J. Gibson's approach to ecological psychology shares this view in that organism and environment monistically impinge on and change with each other (Gibson, 1979). Varela's proposition of an evolutionary"natural drift" (Varela, Rosch, Thompson, 1991) where the organism(s) and its environment are codetermined through a long history of congruence is yet another example of a co-operative meld in place of survivalist adaptation.

Co-operation is the essential quality that inhabits the many

perspectives that have sprung from autopoietic theory. That self/other/environment are distinguishable yet reflexively cocreated. That the linear, dualistic input/output black box, still omnipresent in cognitivist explanations of procedural intelligence 'evolves' to an understanding of the structural coupling of entities/systems. That we can only grasp self by observation of the other in dynamic collusion with our environment. "Intersubjectivity only exists in the mutual interrelationship between subjects that are related to the world; and the world is only brought to articulation in the relation between subjects." (Zahavi, 2001)

Conclusion

Strange choice I realize, to attempt to explicate on our comprehension of each other in virtual/actual networked dialogue through the famously impenetrable prose of theorists like Maturana and Guattari. What is perhaps more accessible is the thread of intersubjectivity that weaves its way through various interpretations of autopoiesis and the structurally coupled cooperation of lived experience. The knowing-how. We are constantly reminded of this, by the perpetual chipping away of the autonomous, rational, Enlightened individual through technologies, produced and rendered by us, that facilitate the chipping away. The etiquette, rituals and negotiation of communication in distributed networks underscores and accentuates the everyday practice of 'becoming.' A heightened awareness of mutual responsibility, through an understanding of our inexorable interconnectedness and selfmaking of other and world, by no means unleashes a spasm of ethical conduct that could, for instance, redirect the devastation of the planets' resources, or painlessly migrate to a postcapitalist utopia.

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Ground Rules for Effective Collaboration

There are several behaviors which have been shown to be helpful to many collaborative groups. Each of these behaviors can be learned, practiced and form skill sets which members can be trained to excel at. It can be helpful to adopt these, and other helpful behaviors as group ground rules and post them to remind yourselves to follow them. A good facilitator can use such ground rules to intervene and help the group succeed.

Be a good listener
Listen carefully and ask for clarification, especially about why people think or feel as they do. Never interrupt. Ask questions to clarify what the issue is and why is it an issue.

Be solution centered
Don't just criticize, suggest solutions and ideas for solving problems. Be sure to state the problem clearly as you can before trying to apply solutions.

Use the right group
Sometimes the wrong set of people spend a lot of time trying to solve a problem that is outside their scope of experience or expertise. Maybe a small group of experts might be better than the large group.

Be open to outcome
Look fairly and equally at all the pros and cons of all ideas. Don't come with "THE PLAN" come with " an idea." Then see where the group expands it and be open to the change. Don't own ideas, give them away to the group. Don't lobby your idea, encourage the group to look at all the pros and cons. Don't set unnecessary limits.

Be concise
Think out what you are going to say before you say it and then be brief. Don't ramble, don't repeat what others have said. If you think the same as someone else who has already spoken, then simply say, " I agree with __."

Be patient
Others may need more time to understand, or need more information. Consensus is NOT a fast decision making process. Be willing to let others have the time they need.

Take a dose of humility
The answer that suits your needs does not mean it's the best answer for everyone, or that what meets your needs meets the needs of others. Learn to say to yourself: I might be wrong. Be willing to learn what lessons the group can teach you. Even if you are the expert.

Take ownership of your feelings and share them when it's needed If you feel unhappy, or uncomfortable say so and try to pinpoint why. Also don't forget to say you are happy or grateful as well.

Take a long term view
Many decisions and proposals are learning experiences for things you have not yet done. If it does not work, you can change it later. Try things out. Experiment. Be willing to try on new ideas and processes. This is an adventure to be explored.

Learn when to let go
Many things a group decides can be redone later. Don't get hung up on small details, let the decision go forward and then examine it later to see if your misgivings were justified or not.

Use I statements to define your needs
When you have things you want or need, tell the group what they are by using I statements such as "I need covered parking because I have an old car that leaks."

Give the reasons behind your thinking
Whenever you state an opinion, you can add valuable information by giving others the reasons for your opinion. Be open to questions and comments about your opinions.

Ask for feedback
Ask others to tell you what they think. Invite others to offer ideas and suggestions. Encourage folks to talk with you about things that you do that bother them.

Clean up your messes
When you say the wrong thing, or act in a way that hurts, angers or alienates others, talk later to discuss what happened and why with those who were affected.

Intervene to help the group
Even if you are not the facilitator, if you notice something is going well, complement the group or person. If things are not going right, try to state what you perceive to be happening and ask for feedback. "It seems when ever we start talking about childcare, I hear angry tones in peoples statements," "Does anybody else sense this?" "Can we process this emotion to find out what's behind it?"

Do your homework
Don't wait until the meeting to get or give information. Call people, hold small gatherings, etc. Read everything you are given closely and think about it before the meeting.

http://www.uhc-collective.org.uk/toolbox.htm (Thanks to Jamie King)
mailto: mail@uhc-collective.org.uk

full-length texts at
www.freecooperation.org

The original impetus for the move, the desire to address misperceptions of gender-blindness in the internet economy, had lost a little of its bite with what corporate culture called that economy's collapse.

15

~ cheek_cheek
with anonymity

by **Minnette de Silva**

I will send something, I thought, later tonight: I Minnette de Silva, first woman architect of Sri Lanka, member of the GuerrillaGirlsBroadBand will let them know about the power of online collaboration to avenge and please women. This is what I reflected recently as I apologized for being unable to confirm a meeting because, with my workstation the dining/living table in a small apartment and dinner-time imminent, my laptop was buried under a pile of half-done homework, unpaid bills, drawings, slide sheets and notes from the teacher about lice and lateness...

It was a 4th birthday celebration. In unaccustomed flesh and bone, 9 members of the GuerrillaGirlsBroadBand, a digital wing of the old Guerrilla Girls, stood with unvirtually raised glasses, most grunting while those in the know sang "Feliz, feliz en tu día." Later, as they jostled round the computer to reach consensus on their New-Year-of-the-Monkey's digital art message to their List, summing and division filled the air. The Broads' branching out into Internet Territory had been a good start, but more was needed. The original impetus for the move, the desire to address misperceptions of gender-blindness in the internet economy, had lost a little of its bite with what corporate culture calls that economy's collapse. But meanwhile, the Broads' new Brand had begun to connect with the hordes of young women turning to new technology

for work and play. Replacing posters on the street with postings to the site, the Broads were using their electronic arts to blaze the trails and titillations of the f(*)(*)-word- (that's FEMINISM, O testosterone-impaired ones) to-be in the ether of the 21st century.

Oh the intimacy of the Internet, or 'Internest' as my fumbling fingers have put it. The perfect place for those otherwise isolated by their heightened awareness of injustice to conspire. Like the latest fashion in toilet art where one-way mirrors enable the user to see all around them while still themselves unobserved. The Blog for example, suddenly mainstream news, is written in the home cocoon (see Raimundas Malasauskas' interview with noted Bloggers on 16BeaverGroup.org where the notion of uploading from a hand-held on the move is eschewed) then put out for all surfers, private or governmental, to read and respond to. However antisocial, housebound, or busy, you too can connect, influence. And this is what the Girls want.

Oh the anonymity of the Internet, analogous to the Guerrilla Girl's hairy mask. The New Oxford American Dictionary includes in its entry on Anonymous, "anonymous FTP site" At last the idea of the pseudonym, always an aspect of the Guerrilla Girls' 'conscience of the artworld' work reminding

people of the existence of women artists over the centuries by taking those artists' names and telling their stories, can be further evolved. I, Minnette de Silva, had to write my own biography to see it done before I died – and now it's out of print. But the BroadBands' names are associated with lists and links aimed at resurrecting, I mean Avenging the dead. And now with digital art creations potentially downloaded and disovulated to millions internationally, you may never know if something came from a Guerrilla or the Girl Next Door. And all while not being judged by the color of our skin, accent of our English OR the length/stiffness of our legs. This too is what the Girls want.

Of course the Broads' collaborations have their problems, both ideological and time-and-place related, just as the original Girls had. GuerrillaGirlsBroadBand intends to tackle more than Chelsea, SoHo and the Met, and Broads come and go as they must, driven by work, study, art and offspring, and some think US Democracy can produce or conceive justice and some do not. But take courage! For, as Sarah Wigglesworth, living woman architect extraordinaire, has said, "the future is HAIRY."

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~ excerpt from **observations on**
collective cultural action

by **Critical Art Ensemble (CAE)**

Classrooms are designed to accommodate aggregates of specialists. Studios are designed to accommodate a single artist, or like the classrooms, aggregates of students working individually. Rarely can a classroom be found that has a space designed for face-to-face group interaction. Nor are spaces provided where artists of various media can come together to work on project ideas.

The more cultural spaces that a person is comfortable working in, the more opportunity s/he has. If designed with these strategies in mind, collectives can configure themselves to ad dress any issue or space, and they can use all types of media. The result is a practice that defies specialization .... CAE, for example, can be doing a web project one week, a stage performance at a festival the next, a guerrilla action the next, a museum installation after that, followed by a book or journal project. Due to collective strength, CAE is prepared for any cultural opportunity. ...For sustained cultural or political practice free of bureaucracy or other types of separating factors, CAE recommends a cellular structure.

In addition, such structure allows CAE to use whatever media it chooses, because the group has developed a broad skill base. Having a broad skill base and interdisciplinary knowl-

edge also allows the group to work in any kind of space.

Formerly, collective structure tended to be based on the idea that all members were equals at all times. ...This notion was coupled with a belief in extreme democracy as the best method of avoiding hierarchy.

CAE follows Foucault's principle that hierarchical power can be productive (it does not necessarily lead to domination), and hence uses a floating hierarchy to produce projects. After consensus is reached on how a project should be produced, the member with the greatest expertise in the area has authority over the final product.

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How can creativity, genuine learning and dialogue, initiative and media competence be unleashed in an institutional setting

~ self-organization, and collaboration

Trebor Scholz(TS) I'd like to talk to you about your idea of education, your notion of the "commune des arts." The model of the Freie Klasse (free class) as it exists in Berlin and Vienna is unheard of in the US.

Between a Meisterklasse in Germany, the Slade School in London, the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in NYC and the Bauhaus University in Weimar and now teaching at the State University of New York I have my fair share of diverse educational experiences. While the US American class room is less hierarchical than the German Meisterklasse, the American system is more school-like. Self-organization is actively prevented by much of post-1968 US campus architecture that is modeled after prisons carefully refusing possibilities of encounter, and social gathering. Universities became de-centralized, rendering campus riots pretty much impossible.

The American consumer-driven educational system causes expectations for forced vocational training allowing less space for experimental approaches. What is in the long-term interest of students may not be immediately clear to them and it takes courage on the side of instructors to insist on their vision. Stanley Aranowitz in "Education and Cultural Studies" (ed. Henry A. Giroux) writes: "School should be a place where the virtues of learning are extolled (a) for their own sake and (b) for the purpose of helping students to become more active participants in the civic life of their neighborhoods, their cities, and the larger world." In the face of increasing university fees attempts of self-organization become increasingly relevant. Maybe even the idea of the Freie Klasse becomes limited here. How can creativity, genuine learning and dialogue, initiative and media competence best be unleashed? For me, the idea of self-organization is related to free networks with the teacher becoming the linker to knowledge. Does the future belong to the "commune des arts"?

Stefan Römer(SR) I was more thinking of my own education, which not only consisted of the study of "art history," but also of working in a print shop and in a renown art gallery where performances and exhibitions took place. I decided for a conceptual art practice, which encompasses traditional art practice, the refusal to produce complete products. In addition, it regards the process of text and discussion as art practice. In Germany this practice is still not accepted, it is considered art critique or journalism, which opens up possibilities for change.

Favoring self-organization as a decoding of the institution of art implies the danger of supporting institutional cutbacks and increased corporate takeover. While reflecting on education, and especially art education, we should not forget that this is a very special area of society`s disciplinarians. It is absurd, but it is in particular industrial rhetoric which decorates itself with the terms of innovation through liberty and creativity. Our discussion about Universities of Art and Academia is therefore conditionally also a creation of an utopia, which inevitably is put into commission of society's reformation. This discursive, artistic production, to which I also count the applied form of theory production, should reflect its institutional function. Here, avant-gardistic rhetoric becomes obsolete, as it has long been the standardized language of advertisement. The "invention" of self-technologies can only be "successful" if this success is critically measured with regard to its conformity to the agendas of governmentality. On this occasion you can necessarily ask how absurd it actually is, that there are MA programs for "art in context" and "new artistic strategies" in certain institutes. I agree with your take on such processes, but I hesitate like Derrida to give up universitas as a knowledge system that was developed over centuries. During the French Revolution the "commune des arts," had the function to organize those artists into institutions. Currently, such a hope would probably be unrealistic as there are too many artists. But I think self-organized universities and academies would really be worth a try.

TS What would a course look like that is based on "discursive processes, and online collaborative practices." A course like that, in the Brechtian sense, would have to demonstrate how to perform a text, how to act it out in the world. The text from the online forum would become the script/ the code that drives the action in the world. How could we bring the pedagogy of Beuys (idea of the social sculpture), Kandinsky, Moholy-Nagy and Klee together with Fluxus practices and Ted Nelson's more useful passionate views? Nelson: "We must create our brave new worlds with art, zest, intelligence and the highest possible ideals." Could we carry the idea of behavioral aesthetics into the classroom? We need complicated, provocative classes that emphasize the idea of collaboration. Do you think the idea of the Freie Klasse <freie Klasse>, that of teacherless or self-chosen curriculum could address these problems?

SR Being convinced that such forms of coding like online forums or consciously used technology will sooner or later change the code or art itself, doesn`t mean hanging up the utopias on old avant-guard rhetoric in my case. In opposition, I believe that they continue to exist along the narrow focus on a radical change of society. As the term "radical" refers etymologically to "being rooted out a radix," you may ask here what should be planted instead. I think that rhizomatic models apply more to new media and their communicative structures, which grows tendrils around old roots, builds nests in them or makes deviant connections. This is how we can develop a "Commune des Arts." To do this we should reflect on current cognitive sciences and apply this to other fields. In fact our path is not pre-determined, it should be constantly renegotiated. The fascinating search of deviant forms of organization, which makes up a good part of the avant-garde seems irritated by the realization that also there we find hierarchical and unbearable conditions and even less time for reflection. For me it seems to be a relatively easy undertaking to propagate grand manifests, but who should be finally convinced by that? It is clear from history that avant-garde rhetoric sells like a hot cake when it comes to promises of politics and strategies of economy – but in the end those ideas are compiled again in long lists and meetings. I think that we can reach a "Commune" only right at the center and by all known means necessary. Institutional differences between art and non-art should be attacked in the same way like the economic goals which are inscribed in every institution.

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a grammar
of free cooperation

In 'A Grammer of the Multitude' Paul Virno attempts to describe the 'nature of contemporary production'. It may be no coincidence that his analysis and theses coincides with what is being discussed here under the rubric of 'free cooperation.'

The questions discussed here are subjective and come up after the very act of 'refusal'. Was is collaboration once we conclude that life is being reduced to work? I would argue that it is important to leave behind the initial, decisive stage of refusal because one otherwise ends up in individual anarchism or a Stirner-type of egoism in which there is nothing left to collaborate on. There must be a basic consensus on what's on the agenda, what is to be done. The collobaration question follows from there and cannot be discussed in a political vacuum, otherwise it transforms into a managerial issue. It is a secondary issue with nonetheless grave consequences. Collaboration itself is not generating issues that can be translated into campaigns.

Key to our effort to theorize individual and collective experiences is the recognition that there must be a freedom to refuse to collaborate. This is a constitutive exit strategy. At first instance this may be a mysterious, somewhat paradoxical statement. Why should the idea of the refusal be promoted as an apriori, as the very foundation of all collaboration, as Christoph Spehr has suggested? It almost sounds like a new dogma, a next rule, yet another human right.

The question of 'free cooperation' is, in essence, one of organization and comes up after the crisis of the (Fordist) factory model and its political mirror, the political party. This may be obvious. The 'Italian' focus on (post)fordism is in fact too much focussed on past twentieth century experiences. It is up to us to update these concepts and come up with case studies of workgroup software, NGO office culture, dotcom leisure work and call centre boredom, project management of events, conditions of free lance labour force.

Even the focus on 'new social movements' may already be outdated and should be replaced with much more temporary ruptures. What is politics after its decentralization? Perhaps it is not even useful anymore talk about 'movements' (as in 'movement of movements'). Movement might suggest too much unity and continuity over time. While the term is accurate if we want to express political and cultural diversity, it still has that promise of continuity in it--and with it comes the suggestion that decline and disappearance can be upholded. The movement should never stop. The energy of the Event that gave the movement its character and direction ought not to die. This is where the gestalt of the 'true believer' enters the story.

Rituals will be invented to bring back the masses to the street, with no matter what price.

According to Virno the crisis of the society of labour is reflected in the multitude itself. We could extend this and say that the multitudes are highly problematic, not for capital or the 'contol society', but for the multitudes themselves. It will take a while to get used to the fact that there is no conciousness in and for itself, that revolutionaries can be wary - and bored - of their revolutions. There is talk of a collective exstacy without Grand Resolution. Fragmentation is not a romantic agony but a prime condition of political life.

Virno, again."Social wealth is produced from science, from the general intellect, rather than from the work delivered by individuals. The work demanded seems reducible to a virtually negligible portion of a life. Science, information, knowlegde in general, cooperation, these present themselves as the key support system of production--these, rather than labor time." This puts cooperation in a state of exception. It's not the rule, not the everyday life condition, it's rare and uncertain. For Virno the difference between labor time and non-labor time falls short. This is exactly why there is so much uncertainty (and curiousity) about collaboration. In what act, work, gesture, idea, there are not traces of collaboration included? The distinction between collaboration and non-collaboration becomes more and more difficult to make. The opposition of lonesome genius versus multi-disciplanary team sounds like an odd lifestyle choice.

What is at stake is the way in which negotiations take place inside each particular 'credit' economy. Which traces remain visible of a collaboration? Can terms of ownership be (re)negotiated further along the line or have forms of ownership and division of labour been fixed at day one? How many 'defeated collaborations' one can bear? Human may once have been 'social animals' but that doesn't mean act like ants. There is enough herd mentality and this makes it hard, even impossible to promote collaboration as a virtue. Yet, both wisedom and knowlegde have blocked the road back to the land of Zarathustra. It is not society that keeps us away from individuation.

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Applications of New Approaches to Audio/Video Digital Indexing in Oral History

Digital technologies are opening new ways to work directly with audio and video documents– approaches with dramatic oral history implications. These range from collection management and access, to formal indexing tools for research, to flexible pedagogic and community uses of oral history collections. In all of these, what is new and significant is the capacity to work directly with voice– and, in video, with bodies, gestures, and non-verbal contexts.

In this sense, new methods return us to one of the original promises of oral history, broadening our connection beyond the limited (and limiting) world of text and all its privileges, and creating new dialogic possibilities grounded in the far richer meanings, and uses, of voice and physical embodiment.
Michael Frisch

UKK - Mission Statement

UKK, Young Art Workers, is an organization for younger artists and art workers in Denmark. The organization was formed in the summer of 2002, as an outcome of the protests against the policies newly elected ultra right wing government in the spring of 2002. Since gaining power in the November 2001 elections, the right wing government has targeted contemporary art among such areas as environmental protection, education, immigration and human rights for economic cut backs and political restrictions.

UKK thus have a dual aim; at once directed outward toward the political field and the media, and inwards towards the organization and structure of the art world and its institutions. UKK aims for a more dynamic and open field for contemporary arts, and is the only organization to include to groups of art workers, artists as well as critics/curators in an effort to bridge the traditional gap between practice and theory, between production and mediation.

Open Archives

The Open Archives Initiative develops and promotes interoperability standards that aim to facilitate the efficient dissemination of content. The Open Archives Initiative has its roots in an effort to enhance access to e-print archives as a means of increasing the availability of scholarly communication.
http://www.openarchives.org/

Free Networks

FreeNetworks.org is a voluntary cooperative association dedicated to education, collaboration, and advocacy of the creation of free digital network infrastructures.
http://freenetworks.org/

Elmwoodstrip

Elmwoodstrip.com is a community dataspace based in Buffalo, NY that brings local residents together and allows them to "click-publish" textual data, imagery and sound. It was developed in response to the the negative effects on local community that have resulted from the globalization of communication via the intenet. The intentionally simple interface allows users with little or no web design knowledge to publish their thoughts and artwork.
Elmwoodstrip.com runs off an open source MySQL database with a PHP/HTML frontend.
http://www.elmwoodstrip.com

Termite TV

Founded in 1992, Termite TV is a video collective based in Philadelphia and Buffalo, which produces alternative programming for television and the web. Termite TV creates multi-faceted and multi-voiced works which address issues of cultural, political, and aesthetic concern.
http://www.termite.org

"A peculiar fact about termite-tapeworm-fungus-moss art is that it moves always forward, eating its own boundaries, and likely as not, leaves nothing in its path but evidence of eager, industrious, unkempt activities" manny farber

The Access Community Infoshop

The Access Community Infoshop is a local center for grassroots activism, creative arts collaboration / exhibition, and serves as a public meeting space for several local groups. We also offer several free internet terminals during our regular hours in addition to maintaining an art gallery, a free store (open barter system), and a radical library. Our group would like to talk about Access and discuss the possibilities that are currently available to us, through collaboration, in the never ending quest to create public space.

Our website is here but it shows its age:
http://www.accesscommunity.net

ArtSci

The ArtSci INDEX [launched December 2003] is an outgrowth of the international symposia on collaboration organized by Art & Science Collaborations, Inc. (ASCI) in NYC [1998, 1999, 2001 and 2002]. This online tool is designed to assist those individuals around the world seeking potential collaborators for art-sci projects. With its special "matching function," the INDEX is the first such online database research tool that matches talent offered [by artists, scientists, technologists, and those in the humanities] with projects seeking specific talent.
http://www.asci.org/INDEX

GuerrillaGirlsBroadBand

In 1985, a band of feminist artists founded the Guerrilla Girls in the wake of Kynaston McShine's remark that any artist who wasn't in his International Survey show at the Museum of Modern Art should "rethink HIS career." Dubbing ourselves "The Conscience of the Artworld," we began making posters that bluntly stated the facts of discrimination, and used humor to convey information, provoke discussion and to show that feminists can be funny. We assumed the names of dead women artists, and began wearing gorilla masks when we appeared in public to conceal our true identities and focus on issues rather than on our personalities.
In the ensuing 15 years, we produced over 80 posters, billboards, postcards, books, and magazine projects, examining discrimination in the artworld and our culture at large. Posters which once appeared on the walls of SoHo in the dead of night now appear on the Internet, in museums and in books. We travel the world over, daring to speak out against discrimination and inequity wherever it rears its ugly head.
Toward the end of the 20th century, the Guerrilla Girls sought out new frontiers in their fight for truth, justice and the feminist way, forming three wings to accommodate their broadening interests: Guerrilla Girls, GuerillaGirlsBroadBand, and Guerilla Girls On Tour. GGBB is the interactive activist wing of the Guerilla Girls, utilizing the potential of new media to increase activism and involvement.
http://www.ggbb.org

The University of Openess

The uo is a framework in which individuals and organizations can pursue their shared interest in emerging forms of cultural production and critical reflection such as unix, education, cartography, physical and collaborative research.
http://uo.twenteenthcentury.com/

Distributed Library Project

The University of Openess' "Distributed Library Project" ; this is "a shared library catalogue and borrowing system for people's books and videos. There is no reason the dlp shouldn't be used to share other resources too, which is one of the development aims of this project. Users of the open source software locate fellow librarians in their vicinity and share items that their local library does not have.
http://dlpdev.theps.net/

Orpheus Orchestra, NYC

Conceived by cellist Julian Fifer and a group of fellow chamber musicians, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra burst onto the classical stage in 1972. The goal was to infuse orchestral repertoire with chamber music principles. The result remains revolutionary: an orchestra with no conductor.

In the absence of a conductor, the individual musicians of Orpheus must rely on one another for repertoire and programming choices, interpretive decisions and ultimately the responsibility of successful performing and recording.

Studio of the Streets (1990-93)

The project Studio of the Streets" included Tony Conrad, Cathleen Steffan, and Ann Szyjka, among other members of the Buffalo media community, filming on the steps of Buffalo City Hall: TV on the spot in support of City funding for a public access TV production studio. However, the project soon evolved away from being a demonstration to become a regular weekly TV show, as the team realized that "Studio of the Streets" had become a vehicle for animating the voices of the community. Rather than thinking of collaboration in the context of this project, Tony Conrad uses the term animation: the practice of enabling the productivity of others. Do you collaborate to enhance your own ability, or that of others? The "animator" doesn't produce the cultural work her/himself but instead animates the work of others. The average people of Buffalo did not believe in their ability to produce television shows, or even to be on TV, until they saw how good they and others actually looked! "Studio of the Streets" launched people into participatory television by having them do the thing that they already know best and have practiced for years: talking to other people about what they feel is important to them. "Studio of the Streets" was about free accessİgiving people a voice, giving them access to the media. Out of the people who were approached on the street to appear on TV, the people who tended to speak to the camera were often unemployed, people who had not sold their voice. People with jobs are often leery of speaking freely; they fear for their positions if they should misspeak or appear too outspoken. "Studio of the Streets" aimed for simplification of the production process – the Do It Yourself aspect: "You too can do this."

neuroTransmitter

neuroTransmitter (nT) is a collaborative working specifically with radio machinations, propeling signals through urban membranes and cellular formations. For nT, the occupation of both ether and urban space simultaneously (through transmission and on-site performance) opens up platforms that shift positionalities and create collaborations between transmitter and receiver, body, sound, and the socio-spatial landscape.

neuroTransmitter is Wayne Hodge, Angel Nevarez, Lize Mogel, Valerie Tevere
http://www.neurotransmitter.fm

Group Material "People's Choice"

"Dear friends and neighbours of 13th Street. Group Material is having an exhibition and you're invited. Group Material is the gallery that opened this October at 244 East 13th. We are a group of young people who have been organizing different kinds of events in our storefront. We've had parties, art shows, movies and art classes for the kids who are always rushing in and out. The Peoples' Choice is the title of our next exhibition. We would like to show things that might not usually find their way into an art gallery. The things that you personally find beautiful, the objects that you keep for your own pleasure, the objects that have meaning for you your family and your friends. What could these be? They can be photographs, or your favorite posters. If you collect things, these objects would be good for this exhibition."
www.undo.net/cgi-bin/openframe.pl?x=/Pinto/Eng/fault.htm

16beavergroup

16beaver is the address of a space initiated/run by artists to create and maintain an ongoing platform for the presentation, production, and discussion of a variety of artistic/cultural/economic/political projects. It is the point of man departures/arrivals.
http://16beavergroup.org/about/

Open Office

An example of stable open source software is "Open Office," which as a community, aims to create the leading international office suite that will run on all major platforms and provide access to the same functionality like Microsoft Office.
http://openoffice.org

Discordia

Discordia is a critical collaborative working at the intersections of art, activism, and techno cultures. Discordia is an experiment in social filtering, collaborative moderation and different styles of communication. In order to try out how software structures influence discussion, Discordia is a weblog - also known as a blog.
http://discordia.us

Open Law

Openlaw is an experiment in crafting legal arguments in an open forum. On the Openlaw web site it reads: "With your assistance, we will develop arguments, draft pleadings, and edit briefs in public, online. Non-lawyers and lawyers alike are invited to join the process by adding thoughts to the Œbrainstorm outlines, drafting and commenting on drafts in progress, and suggesting reference sources."
http://openlaw.org

blips.tk

Blips are temporary departures from familiar experience. Based on the concept that the majority of cultural activity in our post-industrial society remains invisible to the institutions and discourses -critics, art historians, collectors, dealers, museums, curators and arts administrators- who manage and interpret contemporary culture, blips.tk is a collaborative online project that seeks to archive and reflect critically on this "creative dark matter." This open history project contains a database of multimedia submissions, selected essays that reflect on issues raised by this content, as well as a web log for critical debate. We encourage individuals and organizations to submit artwork, ideas, documents, and information of a wide variety that belongs to this shadow realm of creativity. The domain is registered on the island of Tokelau, 480 km north of Western Samoa.
http://blips.tk

The Beauty of Collaboration:
Manners, Methods, and Aesthetics
May 22 to 25, 2003
Banff New Media Institute, Canada

What kinds of systems and tools can we design to facilitate collaboration? What are the protocols of these? Can consensus bring about beauty? How do we evaluate cooperative initiatives? Is collaboration always a positive word or value?

This intense brainstorming session, which included formal presentations, group discussions, and technological demonstrations, was dedicated to discussing and debating tactics for creating and nurturing interdisciplinary collaborative projects taking place at the boundary zone of art, academia and industry.

Reported key points:
- Sharing and making available high-quality information about process and results is the goal toward which collaborative teams should strive.
- Scalability of Collaboration: Within a small group, or pod of researchers or artists, relationships are direct and intense. In fact, the very large-scale collaborative projects at the conference were described as extremely challenging and often unrewarding for the participants.
- Face up to the challenges and problems of collaboration: it`s never a purely positive phenomenon
Collaboration is a complex human-facing problem, which involves many factors, including interpersonal, institutional, and intra-institutional relationships. Collaboration cannot be forced or imposed.
- Always plan to extract maximum value from the process.
Be prepared for things not to work.

http://www.banffcentre.ca/programs/bnmi_beauty_of_collab/detail.asp

"Much of my recent work questions the overall structure of hyperlink connections on the World Wide Web. For example, I have followed a large number of hyperlinks on the Web, charting whether they tended to be international or domestic. I found that despite claims that the Web was somehow diminishing national borders, for various reasons hyperlinks tended to be guided by those borders. They did cross borders more often than telephone calls or letters did, but only by very little. Instead, hyperlink networks appear to map out social networks, providing an indication of cultural or linguistic groups." http://alex.halavais.net/research.html

by Alex Halavais

"I am part of a cloud of organizations, groups, and collectives operating under the working title "Very Interactive Institute." We have a small working and meeting space in the center of Helsinki and most of us are locals. "Very Interactive Institute" is composed of a non-profit organization called Piknik Frequency, a production company Olento, pixelACHE- DIY electronic art festival and Amfibio video performance collective. "Very Interactive Institute" has a core group of 15-20 people and an undefined amount of people involved in one or more of the organizational units.

In the current cloud structure we have several organizational structures and identities, which allows us to move more freely. I feel that this is better than just having one name and identity that has to contain all different ideas and forms of working. We also have more flexibility in finding funding - we have a company interface to the corporate world, and a non-profit interface to public funding."

Piknik http://www.piknik.org/
pixelAche http://pixelACHE.org/new2/hki/home.php
Amfibio http://www.amfibio.org/
Olento http://www.olento.fi/
Juhuu http://juhuu.nu/
RAM 4 Survival Workshop http://www.olento.fi/ram4/
Media Art Collective Katastro.fi http://katastro.fi/

by Juha Huuskonen

Diary entry: 28th August 2030

Somebody asked me why it had all happened like it did today. I think most people couldn't really find a convincing explanation at first. Why did the local art museum issue its call and suddenly open its doors to all the city's asylum seekers? How did such a small, local action then connect to all sorts of gatherings across the European continent? And why did the corporations of the day not see it coming? After all, consumer intelligence was their speciality, and this was nothing if not a free choice revolt. Each person seemed to join by themselves, perhaps out of some unfathomable herd instinct, but nevertheless as individuals. And it wasn't really true that they joined anything anyway. They just went to the museums, kunsthallen, artist spaces - art venues of all sorts and in every major city. They sat, looked around, slowly started to speak to each other and enjoyed it all enough to keep coming back. Soon, the museums started to respond - organising meetings and commissioning short term projects as a result, inviting the press and asking artists and others to turn the tables on cynical journalists. The art mausoleums that had slumbered for so long suddenly started to live. Impromptu activities were welcomed and the rules of engagement with art were changed whenever necessary. Museum workers even started to talk about the need for unconditional hospitality and visitors responded.

Strangely, the action spread across central Europe. For once, our disempowered citizens seem to shrug off their apathy and find a voice beyond the reach of administrative control. Of course, everything stayed on the local level, but a new spark was ignited almost daily and every week a new city fell into line. The speed of the change produced problems, most of which we still have today. When people failed to turn up for work, production initially fell by over 70%. But gradually provisional solutions were found, priorities were changed and people drifted back to work for two or three days a week anyway, just to make enough money to carry on. The corporations issued threats, sackings, even appealed for military action but there were no laws against public cultural attendance and the smart entrepreneurs quickly adjusted to the new lower level economy.

Now, it simply goes on like this. The museums are the new public forums, the remaining party politicians try to go there to make there point but mostly production and distribution take care of themselves, administered by the few who till take pleasure in the treadmill of wealth creation. The purpose of meeting seems to be changing. No longer about protest, it's now about something closer to the old, perhaps mythical, idea of the agora. Exchange simply happens for its own sake and for the pleasure of the result.

Maybe could say everyone's an artist now, except hardly anybody uses that term, preferring other words, usually adapted from local slang still surviving in our international patois. Why did it all happen? If you ask me it's pretty straightforward. It happened because there wasn't anything else to do. We'd exhausted every other option and this was the one place left worth trying. Funny, I guess, but I don't know why we never thought of it before.

by Charles Esche

Artistic Autonomy and the communication society

Following is the text I read in one of those rather disagreeable places to which art circles sometimes lead you. This time, the Tate Modern. The conference, held this Saturday October 25, was called Diffusion: Collaborative Practice in Contemporary Art. Also present were Bureau d'Etudes, Francois Deck, Eve Chiapello, Jochen Gerz, Stephen Wright, John Roberts, Charles Green, and others.

Brian Holmes (Oct. 26, 2003)

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Among my various collaborations with Bureau d'Etudes there is this one-off journal or fanzine called "Artistic Autonomy - and the communication society". This project was born out of the desire to create what seems almost non-existent in the French language: a debate about the means, results and ends of artistic practice, independent from the categories established by the state and the market.

Why talk about autonomy when the major thrust of experimental art in the sixties and seventies was to undermine the autonomous work? This is the question that always arises when you speak with those for whom the institutional discourses still seem to matter. Indeed, the university careers that have been made by refuting Greenburg, by deconstructing the totality of the white male Kantian subject, and by critiquing the closure of the artistic frame are seemingly infinite. And the same holds for the paradoxes that invariably arise when mechanically reproduced works or slices of everyday life are presented in the singularizing spaces of the museum. Sometimes you wonder if the members of the art establishment are not afraid to draw the conclusions of their own ideas. Yet if one truly abandons the notion that an object, by its distinction from all others, can serve as a mirror for an equally singular and independent subject, then the issue of autonomy becomes a deep existential problem, just as it was in the 1910s, 20s and 30s, when the whole debate arose. Because for those without a substitute identity - for those without a passionate belief in their blackness, their whiteness, their Jewishness, their Muslimness, their Communistness, their Britishness or whatever - the condition of existence in the communication society, that is, the awareness that one's own mental processes are intimately traversed or even determined by a flood of mediated images and signs, is at first deeply anguishing, then ultimately anesthetizing, as the postmodern "waning of the affect" sets in. We work always under the pall of this postmodern anesthetic. No doubt there are thousands of exciting ways to make artworks where the question of autonomy is not at issue. But there is some doubt as to whether any of these ways of art-making can be called political. Does politics, in the democratic sense at least, not presuppose that one is somehow able to make a free decision? That one is not blindly driven by a determining, heteronymous force, whether of pain or pleasure? What does it mean to make an artistic decision? And what happens when that decision is collective? How can the sensible world - that is, the world composed by the senses, the intellect and the imagination - be reshaped according to what François Deck would call a "strategy of freedom"? The stakes of autonomy are revealed by the etymology of the word, as has been pointed out by the political philosopher and psychoanalyst Cornelius Castoriadis. "Autos" means

<title>FreeCooperation</title>

self and "nomos" means law. Autonomy means giving yourself your own law. But men and women are social beings; we only exist as "ourselves" through the language of the other, through the sensations of the other; and what is more, this shared language, these transiting sensations, are bound up in the uncertainty of memory and forgetting, the incompleteness of perception, the willfulness of imagination. Thus the attempt to give oneself one's own law becomes a collective adventure, as well as a cultural and artistic one. For it is the very essence of clear consciousness to recognize that we human beings are full of obscurity, of unresolved personal and even historical passions, of half-understood images and enticing forms that we constantly exchange with one another, so that the process of giving ourselves our own laws becomes something quite complex, something experimental and experiential, which can never be resolved once and for all, but only cared for and ushered along in manifold ways, among which we find the arts – those supreme combinations of sensation, intellect and productive imagination. In fact it is exactly at this point that freedom appears as an uncertain strategy among the multitude, because it cannot be reduced to a univocal decision by the one. And in this way, collective autonomy becomes a question both of individual or small-group artistic production, and of large-scale cultural policy.

My belief is that you can only have a real democracy when a societal concern with the production of the sensible is maintained at the level of a forever unresolved but constantly and intensely debated question. This is why I like to work with François Deck – because he has developed a method, a kind of artistic trick, that allows him to explicitly bring the sensible

world into collective questioning. What we really need to do is to spend a lot more time asking each other whether our cultural fictions - our architecture and our ideas, our hierarchies and ambitions and loves - are really any good for us. And to do that, we need to propose new fictions, to shake up the instituted imaginary with what Castoriadis calls the "instituting imaginary." We need to engage in desymbolization and resymbolization, in what Bureau d'Etudes calls "the deconstruction and reconstruction of complex machines." This is the way that artistic practices can affect reality. So I'm saying that art can be a chance for society to collectively reflect on the imaginary figures which it depends upon for its very consistency. But this is exactly where our societies are failing. I think we're looking at a disaster. To show you the extent of it, and the degree to which it calls for a reinvention of artistic autonomy, I want to use two examples. One is a programmatic sentence from the former French culture minister, Jack Lang. And the other is the concrete reality of a major British museum. These two examples will give you, I hope, a fairly precise idea of what I mean by the communication society, and of why it is necessary to conceive artistic autonomy against the background of the really existing institutions of communication. Jack Lang is one of the great socialist managers of people's minds, one the architects of artistic, the people who channel it and control it over time. I can't imagine a better photograph of him than this one, standing with Fidel Castro in front of the Mona Lisa. In 1983, the year that French socialism abandoned its collectivist utopia and the long economic crisis began, Lang came out with this slogan: La culture, c'est les poètes, plus l'électricité. "Culture is the poets, plus electricity." ...What

excerpt from
Trust No One! Some Remarks on the Political Economy of Virtual and Global Networking

Viable counter-strategies against the exploitation and personal/
institutional accumulation of symbolic value in networking are:

- **Separation of domain ownership and administration**
- **multi-administrational structures (many programs allow this)**
- **the funding organization should not own the domain**
- **the physical hosting should be chosen carefully, best at politically trustful projects and organizations**
- **control of representation towards outside: do not let one person do it all**
- **control of inside capacity building: do not let a small group run the network alone, or build an in-group that is too strong, run most of the discussions etc.**
- **structures of solidarity and self-organization inside networks: structures of representation for women, migrants, minorities**
- **>forky< structures: possibility to easily set up special threads,parts, co-mailing lists etc. for closer communication and self-organization, e.g. for the named groups.**
- **...**

by Christoph Spehr

tightly an institution like the Tate is integrated to what Bureau d'études has identified as the financial core of transnational state capitalism? One thing is sure: the old strategy of forming a collective as a way to get into the museum becomes absurd. That much has been proved by the submissive posturing of a group like etoy, which endlessly reiterates the forms of corporate organization, from head-hunting rituals all the way down to the display of self-infantilization. The collaborative art of etoy only restates the painfully obvious: that the values of transnational state capitalism have permeated the art world, not only through the commodity form, but also and even primarily, through the artists' adoption of management techniques and branded subjectivities. It is in this sense that contemporary capitalism has absorbed the artistic critique of the 1960s, transforming it into the networked discipline of "neomanagement," as Eve Chiapello says in her work, or into the opportunism of what I call "the flexible personality."

One response to all of this is - exit. It has been possible to shift the work away from objects, and outside of the immediately normative network, into marginal realms of protest and opposition whose consistency and sustainability over time becomes the key issue. Yet in my opinion, this exit into the margins is still intimately and paradoxically intertwined with the communication society. We all know very well that the Internet, whose hardware has been built by industrial corporations close to the financial core, is currently the single most integrative system there is. It is what I call an Imperial infrastructure. And it acts as an ideological state apparatus, in the Althusserian sense, but on the scale of transnational capitalism: it hails you, it connects to you and gives you an IP number; it interpellates you into Imperial ideology. In this way it exterts its deterritorializing effect, it transforms populations according to the requirements of capital, configuring the global division of labor. But at the same time, by simultaneously increasing the levels of both alienation and communicational agency, it has made possible new territorializations, new social and political formations, which reopen the questions of class composition - and therefore, the possibilities of a new kind of class antagonism, outside the communist and workerist frameworks that date back before the time of Lenin. The last few years have offered a multitude of opportunities for artists to work outside the established institutions, and off the traditional mental maps, in order to experiment, to create and distribute farflung new imaginaries. We have seen many new inventions. And it has also been possible, with difficulty of course, to raise the level of threat, and to help provoke a crisis of legitimacy, through the complex practice of a self-dissolving, carnavalesque violence which has been both useful and necessary. These practices, as insufficient and rapidly outdated as they may be, have had the enormous advantage, for people involved in art and activism, of constituting positions from which to speak, positions at once distinct from and connected to the larger social landscape. They have given real meaning to another one of the collaboration projects I'm involved in, which is the attempt to define the communicative, collective, reciprocal and mutually sustaining individuation of the Multitudes.

Shall we then just abandon the museums? My position is that they can be occupied just like any other distribution mechanism within the communication society - and they should be

occupied, in an uncompromising way, so as to generate not just debate, but conflict over how they are run and what they stand for. But there's an even more important question, which is this: Shall we abandon the historical practice of experimental art, as it emerged from its last metamorphosis, in the period around 1968? Is this kind of art fatally involved with neo-management, or completely permeated by the opportunism of the flexible personality?

Critical Technical Practices- - - - - - - - - - - -

hi all,

reading trebor's and geert's notes on the proposed conference (freecooperation.org), I found a question that I am especially interested in: "How can we re-define a critical network based practice that takes account of its social context...?" phoebe sengers keeps a list of us who discuss our work as "critical technical practices"(http://www2.cs.cmu.edu/~phoebe/work/critical-technical-practices.html). many of us are former escapees from university or industry artificial intelligence labs that have ended up in the arts and/or the field of science studies. the label "critical technical practitioner" comes from an essay that phil agre wrote in dialog with some of us about ten years ago:

"Toward a Critical Technical Practice: Lessons Learned in Try to Reform Artificial Intelligence" http://dlis.gseis.ucla.edu/people/pagre/critical.html at the time the basic issue, for me, was simply this: most artificial intelligence (ai) and computer science (cs) labs are largely sponsored by defense departments, intelligence agencies and large corporate interests. but, many of us working at such places had left-leaning or radical politics and we were rather at a loss to explain the political agency of our work. i think richard stallman's own narrative — on launching the free software movement from within the mit ai lab — contains similar paradoxes. some of us — this was in the 1980s — began to ask whether it was possible to do critical work within an ai or cs lab. personally, i ended up leaving the yale ai lab to become an unofficial grad student here at the university of california, santa cruz to learn the critical perspective of donna haraway and her students of the time (late-80s/early-90s). these questions are still ripe — even for those of us no longer working within military or corporate dominated labs. some of the focal terms chosen by trebor and geert — e.g., "social networks" and "smart mobs" — are under intense investigation by the military, intelligence agencies and corporate researchers. to articulate a critical practice with — even against — such a lexicon is challenging since critical findings are often easily convertable for "administrative" purposes. ("critical/administrative" is the dichotomy introduced by paul lazarsfeld in the 1940s to distinguish his work (administrative, largely for corporate and military interests) from the work of his colleagues — e.g., adorno — in the frankfurt school (critical).) compared to my understanding of 15 years ago, i have a different perspective on these issues having spent the majority of the '90s as a grad student and research scientist at the mit media laboratory, a largely corporate — but not military — sponsored laboratory (thus implying a different — not necessarily better! — set of research priorities). i think it is possible to create, for example, a critical, web-based artistic practice, but to do so it is necessary to simultaneous design/create/implement alternative software and also articulate alternative means for evalu-

works well or poorly. for example, "social networks" is a field of inquiry largely dominated by quantitively-oriented sociologists and, increasingly, mathematically-oriented physicists and engineers. thus, there is a quantitative means for evaluating social networks, but is this the sort of evaluation/critique that we are interested in here, in this discussion? if not, then how else might such work be critiqued or evaluated? if we are to use "social networks" to discuss and evaluate our own work, then what's the alternative to employing — for instance — quantitative, graph theoretical measurements of centrality and connectivity to articulate what is meant by a phrase like "good community"? does the work of manual castells or robert putnam offer a suitable answer?
Warren Sack (Sept. 24, 2003)

Because of the nature of the media arts, you can't produce a work unlessyou have a group of people that support you. In the case of most of the"third world" and Latino artists that I know, the work is produced becausethe we offer our human and material resources to the production of the work.The same take place when organizing new media exhibit in Latin America.Since the museums don't have the resources, we have to depend on friends and-supporters to produce the show. In the last InteractivA, the artists whocame to Merida did help to set up the show because not of the museumassistant really new how to hang a new media show. That was a greatcollaborative a experience.
Saludos,
Raul Ferrera-Balanquet (Sept. 17, 2003)

I generally present networks as a social/tech-

nical concept versus hierarchies each at the ends of a sliding scale. The axis of this scale is a qualitative measure of the 'quality' and especially 'balance' of bi-directional exchanges of human energies (which are specifically NOT limited to linguistic-based exchange), but refers to the TOTAL 'spectrum' of 'real' energy exchange occurring. It is possible to position a variety of different types of social organization on this scale using this criteria.

The scale may also incorporate general values like static/dynamic, death/life, closed/open, filtered/unfiltered and other fuzzy concepts...

refer to http://neoscenes.net/hyper/
silke/silke01.html for a few more
maxims on networks and energy...
John Hopkins (Sept. 9, 2003)

Shirky's essay applies Wilfred Bion's thought in "Experiences in Groups" to various forms of electronic conversation. In his book Bion describes early efforts to carry on group therapy, first with returning WWII veterans, then more generally. As I remember it, Bion was first struck by the expectations everyone in the group had about how his own role should be carried out. Once frustrated by Bion's miserably unresponsive and counterproductive performance (as they saw it), groups developed along one of the three less-than-ideal lines described by Shirky (replace the priest, watch the romantic developments, or flee). These were not individual responses, but characteristics of the whole group. The sense in which the group is an enemy of itself becomes apparent, I think, from "the moment of conception," as a result of the groups inability to get beyond these three alternatives. Interestingly, Bion's

book moves beyond the small group and into discussions of nations (a nation at war is functioning as a fight/flight group).

In the interview with Christoph Spehr (Geert or Trebor conducted, I believe), Spehr's use of science fiction for imagining better or more constructive possibilities sounds like the "thought experiment" strategy in Anglo-American philosophy. Spehr expresses some admiration for this type of thought, but in my experience it is distinctinctively "terraneous thinking" of the alien, a haven for the retreat from responsibility Spehr admirably accepts, and a death knell for maquis (otherwise melancholic over the failure of the Left, yet given some freedom inevitably pursuing new plans of learning and prospects for locating "temporary autonomous zones").
Bernard Roddy (Oct. 4 2003)

Transversality thread-‑-‑-‑-‑-‑-‑-‑-

Gerard Raunig
just to throw another concept into the debate regarding forms of collaboration: what about felix guattari's notion of transversality? in the context of a conference in vienna in 2002 i tried to work out an update of this concept deriving from the sixties and seventies anti-psychiatrist movement and put it into the context of anti-globalization:
http://www.republicart.net/disc/mundial/rau nig02_en.htm (Oct 16, 2003)

Jamie King
As I understand it, this line of observation of 'transverse' social processes originates with Felix Guattari at the La Borde clinc. This is without going back to the texts, but from memory transversality is posed as an alternative mechanism to classical Freudian transference. Guattari reconfigured the psychiatric clinic along similar lines to the Socialist Patients Collective (SPK), noting that the analyst/analysis and doctor/patient binaries ignored and/or denied the constant non-hierarchical, social processes underlying them. In the clinic's reconfiguration, such processes / relationships were actively calculated into the therapeutic process. Together members of the clinic sat to discuss and work through the social symptoms that constituted them.

I think this notion of the transversal relation is absolutely essential in reading and producing organisation. It is clear, for example, that many of those who 'do well' in corporate and academic situations do so because of their ability to negotiate complex social connections, to understand unspoken allegiances and to make their own, and, in general, to appreciate that the nuances of the social world completely exceed that which is recognised as its formal organisational quality.

Likewise Zizek, I think, has a riff about the comedy of a soldier who always follows the rules to the letter— because he has no knowledge of improvised, transverse relationships to the rule-set, he appears as a walking comedy.

A discussion on transversality could be productive here. What is our living relationship to the rule? How do improvised/occult social forms insert themselves into the procedural code? How does the langue of law play against the parole of social life? Can we open a space for the transverse? Or is it, perhaps, what can never be 'written in' to an organisational form? (Oct 17, 2003)

Gerard Raunig

"... a particular form of local, specific struggles, whose relationships and necessary unity could no longer be the result of totalization and centralization, but, as Guattari stated, of a transversality." (Gilles Deleuze, Foucault) beyond the question of the (exclusive?) privilege of acting transversally it is mainly about drawing transversal lines in "specific struggles", in activist contexts: Guattari himself (and of course also Deleuze) used the notion of transversality in very diverse theoretical and political contexts, they did not define it (as usually) and therefore it is rather open. Abstractly speaking the concept of transversality goes against both vertical and horizontal structures. this is why i mentioned it here in the actual context of organisational forms and especially forms of "free" cooperation: as a tool in today's tricky situation where activists find themselves not only opposing the rigid vertical hierarchies of a state apparatus, but also the quasi horizontal machine of globalized capitalism that tends to copy not only the content, but also the (organisational) forms of what negri/hardt call multitude.

Contrary to openly hierarchical networks and pseudo-non-hierarchical networks, which also seek to cover up hierarchies as poly-centric networks, transversal lines develop structures that are a-centric, that do not move only on the basis of given strands and channels, never

from one point to another, always right through, in between the points, in a completely different direction. In other words, transversals are not at all connections between multiple centers or points; they are lines that do not necessarily even cross anywhere, lines of flight, fault lines, continuously eluding the systems of points and their coordinates. This means of course something different than the old notions of inter- and transdisciplinarity. transversality implies a concrete project, temporary, precarious, with a political aim, bundling the specific competences of the actors into a collective line. on the level of cooperation this means to temporarily open up border spaces, in which different positions of artistic practice, political action and theory production can oscillate, at least reducing the harshness of binary systems and hierarchies between theory and practice, art and activism, virtual and real etc. (Oct 17, 2003)

> **In activist contexts: Guattari himself (and of course also Deleuze) used the notion of transversality in very diverse theoretical and political contexts, they did not define it (as usually) and therefore it is rather open. Abstractly speaking the concept of transversality goes against both vertical and horizontal structures.**

Re: A Group Is Its Own Worst Enemy (Clay Shirky)

Hello everyone -

It's quite interesting to be reading "A Group Is Its Own Worst Enemy" - the paradoxes of free cooperation appear here in a nutshell, and, maybe like Clay Shirky, I don't think the question is primarily technological. Rather the essence lies in discovering and signifying the aims of a free cooperation which upholds the meaning of both those terms. How to be free and at the same time cooperate - that is, create a work in common, as the etymology of the second word suggests? This, as we know, is not particularly easy, particularly over time. In the case of Multitudes, it's clear that we don't want a filtered list, because if we do not expose ourselves to the unexpected input of the real multitudes, then what's the use? On the other hand, the journal and its concept are there to accomplish a specific kind of experimental work, which is also contextually political and therefore requires, at the very least, some concentration and concentration, if it is to become anything at all.

My own position is that those of us directly involved in the project need to assert a level of questioning that will draw the whole online discussion higher out of the general tidal dreck that free narcissism so copiously produces. But there may be some other opinions on that question, among a crowd as experienced as I expect this one is. As I stated before, the object of the list I'm talking about is also that of remaining exposed to a life-potential that is beyond any control. But for me, just accepting a level of chatter punctuated by seemingly accidental moments of grace is not enough, hardly a success. I think that pleasure in the sheer diversity of expression is some kind of weird ideology you tell yourself you believe in. Filtering, on the other hand, becomes an acceptance of the fact that there are fences, and "fuck off if you don't like it, infy" (to use the notorious word that an awful writer, the most ill-chosen of the Nobels for literature, used constantly to describe those around him: "infy" meant "inferior" to V.S. Naipul, who just considered himself superior and that's it).

The other general question I have, which again has to do with the enigma of equality, is this: I know very well that free cooperation works among certain people who have a glint in their eye and who recognize, for themselves, the value of collaborations that can't be pinned down to money or hierarchy or sentimentality. But these kinds of people are fairly rare, and soon saturated with projects. What is most important: pursuing a few such projects in the most efficient way, or working on strange and even artistic forms of "pedagogy" that might give more people the insight into how to make free cooperation something like art in Filliou's phrase: i.e. that which makes life more interesting than art? How, within a predominantly individualistic society, to make free cooperation more interesting than uncooperative freedom?

best, Brian

Conference Participants

16beavergroup (Ayreen, Rene Gabri; NYC)
Alan Moore (NYC)
Alan Sondheim (Brooklyn)
Allan O'Connor (Free Anarchist University Toronto)
Andrea Polli (Hunter College)
Anna Harding (Goldsmiths College; London, UK)
Arjen Keesmaat (DeWaag, Amsterdam)
Barbara Lattanzi (Smith College)
Benjamin Gerdes (NYC)
Benjamin Macko Hill (Seattle)
Blips.tk
Brian Holmes (Paris)
Caroline Koebel (SUNY at Buffalo)
Chris Coleman (SUNY at Buffalo)
Christoph Spehr (Bremen)
Critical Art Ensemble
Dave Pape (SUNY at Buffalo)
Donald Jacobs (CATE, SUNY at Buffalo)
Elizabeth Knipe (SUNY at Buffalo)
Eric Goldhagen (Open Flows, Interactivist.com)
Eva Sjuve (Rotterdam)
FACES
free103point9
Gender Changer Academy
Georg Schoelhammer (Springerin Magazine, Vienna, Austria)
Gregory Sholette (Colgate University)
GuerillaGirlsBroadband
Hans Meyer (MapHub)
Holly Johnson (SUNY at BUFFALO)
Horit Herman Peled (Oranim College, Tel Aviv, Israel)
Jane Crayton (University of Colorado at Bolder)
Janis Demkiw (Toronto)
Jeff Maki (MapHub)
Jennifer Peterson (University of Colorado at Bolder)
Jenny Perlin (Sarah Lawrence College)
Jessica Hammer (New York University)
Jessica Leber (University of Colorado at Bolder)
John Duda (Johns Hopkins University)
Jon Ippolito (Guggenheim Museum)
Joline Blais (University of Maine)
Jon Rubin (SUNY Purchase)
Jorge Nava (University of California San Diego)
Josephine Anstey (SUNY at Buffalo)
Katherine Carl (School of Missing Studies, NYC)
Katrien Jacobs (Emerson College, Boston)
Kurt Weibers (www.globalpointstrategies.com)
Laura McGough (Washington, DC)
Loren Sonnenberg (Access Community Space, Buffalo)
Los Nukiis (NYC)

Loss Pequeño Glazier (SUNY at Buffalo)
Lucia Sommer (University of Rochester)
Carbon Defense League (Pittsburgh)
Maria Damon (University of Minnesota)
Marie-Christiane Mathieu (Montreal)
Martin Lucas (Hunter College, Manhattan Neighborhood Network, Paper Tiger TV)
Maurice Methos (Emerson College, Boston)
McKenzie Wark (The New School)
Mike Frisch (SUNY at Buffalo)
Mike Steventon (Interaccess, Toronto)
Nathan Martin (Carnegie Mellon University)
neuroTransmitter (NYC)
Page Sarlin (School of the Art Institute of Chicago)
Patrick Lichty (Los Angeles, Intelligent Agent Magazine, Yes Men)
Patrick Rosas (Brazilian Tactical Media Lab)
Paul Vanouse (SUNY at Buffalo)
Paul Visco (SUNY at Buffalo, Canisius College)
Rachel Stevens (Brown University)
Ricardo Miranda Zuñiga (College of New Jersey)
Rozalinda Borcila (Cluj-Napoca, Romania)
Sandy Baldwin (West Virginia University)
Sarah Lewison (University of California San Diego)
Sara Diamond (Banff Centre)
Saul Albert (University of Openess)
Scott Bricker (MapHub)
Scott Patterson (PdPal, Parsons School of Design)
Shawn Rider (SUNY at Buffalo)
Sher Doruff (DeWaag, Amsterdam)
Simon Biggs (Sheffield Hallam University/ University of Cambridge, UK)
Simon Sheikh (Nordic Institute For Contemporary Art; Helsinki, Finland)
Srdjan Normal (School of Missing Studies, NYC)
Stefan Römer (Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Munich)
Stephanie Rothenberg (SUNY at Buffalo)
Susan Laxton (Columbia University)
Suse Lang (DASH, NEURO, Munich)
Termite TV
Thomas Owen (Brown University)
Tim Jaeger (University of California San Diego)
Tom Leonhardt (SUNY at Buffalo)
Tony Conrad (SUNY at Buffalo)
Trevor Paglen (UC Berkeley)
Uche Nduka (Nigeria/Germany)
Wendy Hui Kyong Chun (Brown University)
Wolfgang Staehle (The Thing, NYC)